Introduction to the Pentateuch

tetrateuch) are also helpful: the patriarchal promises, guidance out of Egypt, guidance in the wilderness, the Sinai revelation, and guidance into the arable land. Or one can follow the markings of the several uses of tôlĕdôt, or "generations," formula which structure Genesis (2:4a, 5:1; etc., - the P tradition). If "promise" is taken as the overarching concept (it certainly dominates the patriarchal stories), one is tempted to include Josh, which tells the story of the fulfillment of the promise of land (hence, with von Rad, a hexateuch). However, Jewish tradition has separated the Law from the (Early) Prophets. The best explanation of this is given by J. Sanders (Torah and Canon [Phl, 1972] 44-53). The insertion of Deut in its present place is a deliberate break in the story line of promise/fulfillment, which underlines the figure of Moses as Torah giver, the true leader for the postexilic community (Mal 3:23 [4:4]; Ezra 8:1).

5 (II) Authorship. For almost two millennia the Pentateuch was attributed to Moses as author by both Jewish and Christian tradition. Although significant questions about his authorship were raised at points along the way, it was not until the 18th cent. that the question was seriously broached. Today it is a commonplace that he did not write the Pentateuch, but as we shall see the formation of these books is still shrouded in

mystery.

Certain obvious facts suggest that Mosaic authorship is not the right fit. Moses' death is recorded in Deut 34. Various formulas suggest a time after the Mosaic period ("until this day," Deut 34:6; "when the Canaanites dwelt in the land," Gen 13:7; the designation of the land E of the Jordan as "the other side," indicating the point of view of a resident of Palestine, which Moses never entered, Gen 50:10; and various anachronisms, such as the mention of Philistines, Gen 26:14-18). One of the striking features which early on prompted the investigation of the books was the alternation of the sacred name Yahweh with the generic name for divinity, Elohim. This indication of differences is relatively superficial; it has to be supported by some consistent factors that can explain the formation of the Torah. It was when the divine names came to be associated with characteristic vocabulary, narrative styles and content (hence "constants" which suggested different authorial hands), that J (for Yahwist) and E (for Elohist) began to emerge as plausible sources in the actual text. Another telling argument was the recognition of doublets (the same event related twice), such as the call of Moses (Exod 3,6), or the endangerment of the ancestress (Gen 12:9-13:1; 20:1-18; 26:1-17). The complexity of the Torah called for the recognition of various strands within it.

This is not the place to rehearse the complicated history of modern biblical criticism (but it should be noted that it was honed on the analysis of the Pentateuch; → OT Criticism, 69:12-50). The differences in names and vocabulary, in style and content, within the Pentateuch were noted, and they called for an explanation. Were they due to various documents, or was it a question of "fragments" that were eventually assembled? Or another possibility: Was there a basic narrative which came to be supplemented (supplementary hypothesis)? Finally, a brilliant synthesis of previous efforts was presented by Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918), and it has dominated the field ever since, despite modifications. This "documentary hypothesis" recognizes four documents in the following sequence: J (9th cent.), E (8th cent.), D (Deuteronomist, 7th cent.) and P (Priestly, postexilic). These four major written sources were eventually combined in the postexilic period under the guiding hand of the P tradition, and probably a redactor (R). Behind each of these JEDP sigla stands either an individual (esp. urged in the case of Yahwist) or, more likely, a whole school. Later nuances were brought to the theory. First, there is now a tendency to date J and E earlier (10th and 9th cents.). Second, there is a recognition that these "documents" should be conceived more flexibly as "traditions," which incorporate any number of earlier oral and written traditions. Although later scholars tended to fragment J into separate sources (J1 and J2, etc.), the tendency has been to hold to the fourfold strand and to recognize the existence of previous traditions that have entered into these sources.

[1:5-7]

As a reminder that this synthesis remains only a brilliant hypothesis, recent scholarship has raised objections (summarized in HBMI 263-96; JSOT 3 [1977] 2-60). Rolf Rendtorff (Das überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch) can be taken as a typical and formidable example. He claims that J is not a full narrative that weaves through the Pentateuch, attributable to one or more "theologians." It is rather an editorial reworking of many individual pieces (like P, as well). The real redaction of the Pentateuch comes with a deuteronomistic editor. There were first individual stories (e.g., the different patriarchs) which were combined in a larger complex by some unifying theme (e.g., the promises). The integration of all these complexes into the final form was a definitive theological redaction under deuteronomistic influence; see R. Rendtorff, The Old Testament

(Phl, 1986) 157-64.

The modern consensus on the formation of the Pentateuch has been breached, but not replaced. Certain views still remain as workable hypotheses. There is widespread agreement that Exod 25-Num 10 belongs to the postexilic P tradition, even though much older material is incorporated in it. The book of Deuteronomy has a unique stamp and is appropriately named D, and it was probably formed over the course of the 8th-6th cents. But the distinction between J and E has always been a bone of contention, long before the current uncertainty. The present tendency is to think more in terms of expansions of J, and to recognize the role of a redactor (R). In the NJBC the designations J and E are indicated in line with the received views of the present century, but they are intended to serve as guidelines for the reader, rather than as settling issues that are still

under judgment.

It is helpful to attend to the usual characterization of the four traditions, with the proviso that these generalizations are not absolute. J is marked by lively anthropomorphisms, vivid storytelling, and creative theological vision (promise/fulfillment dynamic). J articulated the old traditions, perhaps in response to the Solomonic enlightenment (so von Rad). The Elohist remains a problem. E has been considered to be merely interpolated independent traditions, or a redaction of J that never existed on its own. It has been associated with the traditions of the northern kingdom and supposedly emphasizes morality and reflects the proper response of Israel: faith, and fear of the Lord. D is a very clear tradition, but its existence in the Pentateuch outside of Deut itself is not very clear. It insists on fear/love of God in terms of obedience to the divine commands and under threat of punishment. Its exhortatory style and its language give it a characteristic stamp, so that it is recognizable even when it appears outside the Pentateuch, as in the typical passages (Josh 1:1-9; 23:3-16) in Dtr (this is the conventional abbreviation for the deuteronomistic history contained in Josh-2 Kgs, which shows strong D influence). P is another clearly marked strand. It is concerned with questions of cult and ritual (Lev), is interested in genealogies (Gen), and in contrast to the "Name" theology of Deut (Deut 12:5,11,21)

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The characteristic phraseology, themes, and emphases of the traditions are brought out in the commentaries, but the reader should be forewarned of the general nature of this characterization. For details on the four sources see IDBSup 229-32, 259-63, 683-87, 971-75;

Brueggemann, Vitality esp. 127-41.

The analysis of the formation of the Pentateuch has many implications for the rest of the OT. It is generally agreed that Gen-Deut never functioned as a complete Torah until the exilic period. Before that time, several traditions, oral and written, would have provided guidance (not to mention the collections of prophetic oracles). The home of the J tradition is usually considered to be Judah, whereas E is assigned to Israel (an affinity with Hosea). The culmination of the deuteronomic movement in the reform of Josiah (641-609) represents a tradition (D) that originated first in the north and then became important in Judah. The various law codes (of the Covenant, Exod 20:22-23:19; Holiness, Lev 17-26; Deuteronomy, Deut 12-26) have many practices in common, but they also show the development, characteristic of law, that took place over several centuries. In the case of the centralization of worship, an emphasis in Deut and Dtr, one has to remember that this was a slow development; it would be an anachronism to understand it as operative in the time of Elijah (9th cent.).

In summary, it should be noted that conclusions can be drawn from the stages through which the Pentateuch passed. Sometimes these conclusions may not really justify statements of fact about history. Thus, one may well wonder if the literary separation of the Sinai tradition from the exodus tradition, as von Rad (PHOE 1-26; see H. Huffmon, CBO 27 [1965] 101-13) argues, finds an echo in Israelite history, so that the two traditions were originally quite disparate and only united at a much later time. It is possible to read the Pentateuch in an "interlinear" way, as it were, drawing conclusions concerning Israel's history that are quite hypothetical. Thus, a reconstruction of the nature of the tribes on the basis of data concerning the patriarchs and the "sons of Joseph" is necessarily tenuous (see the attempts of de Vaux in EHI 475-749; of course, the Pentateuch forms only part of the data one must work with).

It is undeniable that the Pentateuch contains old covenant traditions that formed the religious charter of the tribes that constituted the people of God. "Ethical monotheism" is not the creation of the 9th-cent. prophets, as Wellhausen claimed. Amos (3:2) and Hosea (4:1-2) judged the people on the basis of covenantal stipulations (no matter when the term covenant, or berît,

came into common usage).

(III) Literary Forms. The traditional acceptance of Mosaic authorship brought in its wake a rigid notion of history in the Pentateuch. Presumably everything occurred in Exod-Deut as Moses wrote it, for he would have been a firsthand witness. The equation of biblical truth with historical truth, as exemplified in this case, is a form of reductionism; it restricts the divine freedom to produce a literature that is as rich as the OT is in fact. This means that one must read the Pentateuch (not to mention the entire OT) with an awareness of the various literary forms that are contained within it. From the time of H. Gunkel's famous commentary on Genesis, scholars have been greatly preoccupied with the question of Gattungen, or forms, and the Pentateuch has provided innumerable examples for analysis.

(Coats, G., Genesis [FOTL 1; GR, 1983]. Hayes, J. H. (ed.), Old Testament Form Criticism [San Antonio, 1974]. Koch, K., The Growth of the Biblical Tradition [NY, 1969]. Tucker, G. M., Form Criticism of the Old Testament [Phl, 1971].)

Some genres are easier to recognize than others. Among them may be indicated the following (the list is far from exhaustive):

Laws. These take up a large portion of the Pentateuch, from Exod to Deut; see de Vaux, AI 143-63.

Etiology. A narrative that provides an explanation for a certain name or situation. The etiology can be wordplay (Exod 15:23, Marah), or it can be a narrative that explains an event, such as the explanation given in Gen 47:13-26 for the land tax established by Joseph.

Ritual. A description of the way in which a community is to carry out (significant) ceremonies, such as the offering of the firstfruits in Deut 26:1-11, or the

prescriptions for sacrifices (Lev 1-7).

Genealogy. A list that traces ancestral descent and/or relationship. This can be linear, giving only one line of descent (10 generations from Adam through Seth to Noah, Gen 5), or it can be segmented (branching), as in the list of the sons of Jacob in Gen 46:8-27. It should be noted that ancient genealogies were not intended to be historical records. They include more than blood relationship, for they indicate the ties formed by commerce, geography, and other concerns (see R. R. Wilson, Genealogy and History in the Biblical World [Yale Near Eastern Researches 7; New Haven, 1977]).

Hieros logos. "Sacred words," or sacral tradition, which refer to the origin of a holy place (Gen 28:10-22;

Blessing. A form of speech that imparts an efficacious power (a performative word) upon someone. When the blessing is given on the deathbed (see Deut 33), it has also been called a "testament."

Other literary genres are more problematic. Scholars differ in their understanding of myth, saga, legend, novella or short story, and some of these can be subdivided into specific types (e.g., family saga, etc.). The purpose here is to indicate the range of possibilities.

Myth. The understanding of this term varies widely. It has been defined as a narrative about gods (H. Gunkel; perhaps only Gen 6:1-4 would qualify in the OT). It is also viewed as the story that accompanies ritual. It can also designate a way of thinking, the mythopoeic quality of human thought; see H. Frankfort, et al., The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man (rev. ed., Chicago, 1977) 3-27.

Saga. G. Coats (Genesis 319) defines this as "a long, prose, traditional narrative having an episodic structure and developed around stereotyped themes or objects." This can be further refined as primeval (J strand in Gen 1-11), family (the Abraham story of J in Gen 12-26), heroic (Moses in the J version, Exod 3ff.)

EXODUS

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INTRODUCTION

Exod is the second book of the Pentateuch, a five-section compilation of diverse traditions of varying age edited by the Priestly redactor (P) in the 6th cent. BC. The Eng title Exodus is derived from the LXX and means literally "going forth (from Egypt)," one of the main events narrated. The Hebr title 'elleh šēmôt, "these are the names (of the patriarchs who came to Egypt)," is simply the first words of the book, the ancient manner of naming scrolls.

Exod must be seen as a part of the Pentateuch, since the liberation from Egypt and the establishing of the law and dwelling (tabernacle) at Mount Sinai (the contents of Exod) are only one part of a story that begins with the creation of the world in Gen and ends in Deut with Moses addressing Israel poised to conquer Canaan. The same ancient sources that make up the other books of the Pentateuch appear also in Exod: J, E, and P (the last term designating both ancient records and 6th-cent. redaction; \rightarrow Pentateuch, 1:4–8). This commentary notes the sources according to the scholarly consensus, without discussing the many controverted or uncertain attributions. It emphasizes P the redactor since P is the final teller of the tale.

3 (I) Significance. Exod has had a powerful hold on the imagination of later biblical authors and of Jewish and Christian thinkers. The book begins with the people in an alien land, unmindful of Yahweh's promises to them, oppressed by a cruel Pharaoh acting as a "god" toward them by regulating every aspect of their life and

keeping them slaves in Egypt. Yahweh defeats Pharaoh by a series of 10 plagues and brings the people to his mountain, Sinai (an anticipation of Canaan and Zion). At Sinai he confirms Moses as their leader, gives them his laws, establishes his dwelling, and sets them on their journey to his land Canaan. In this task, Moses is the servant, anticipating in his own life (chaps. 2-4) the people's movement from Egypt to Sinai. Moses becomes the great servant of God, the model for the biblical portraits of Joshua, Jeremiah (cf. Jer 1:4-10), Second Isaiah, and Jesus. Inescapably sharing in the people's plight, he is also close to God; by his mediation he brings people and God into faithful relationship. Exod is an indelible portrait of the community of God, called from false and demeaning servitude in an alien land to journey to the promised land.

4 (II) Outline. P in Exod arranges his traditions into two interlocking parts: the rescue of the Hebrews in Egypt from Pharaoh (1:1-15:21) and the journey from Egypt to Sinai (12:37-40:38). The journey is in 12 stages, each stage marked by the formula "they departed from place name a and encamped at place name b." The people begin the divinely led journey while still in Egypt before the death of Pharaoh (12:37; 13:20; 14:2); the first three stages in Egypt interlock the two halves of the book. Israel did not "wander"; it was led in purposeful stages by the fire and the cloud. The seventh stage (19:1) begins the second half of the series. The people remain here from Exod 19:2 to Num 10:10, receiving

[3:5-7]

from God those gifts that in antiquity make a people: a leader (Moses), law, a temple (the desert tabernacle) with its officials and rituals, and a land.

(I) The Hebrews Freed from Pharaoh in Egypt (1:1-15:21)

(A) Danger (1:1-2:22) (a) Israel's Children Become a Numerous People in Egypt (1:1-7)

Pharaoh's First Assault: Oppressive Labor (1:8-14)

Pharaoh's Second Assault: Killing of the Male Children (1:15-22)

The Birth of Moses (2:1-10)

Moses Flees Egypt and Settles in Midian (2:11-22)

(B) God Commissions Moses. First Narrative (2:23-6:1)

(a) The Cries of the People Come Up to God (2:23-25)

The Call of Moses at the Mountain of God (3:1-4:17)

Moses Returns to Egypt (4:18-26)

Initial Acceptance by Aaron and the Elders (4:27-31)

The First Meeting with Pharaoh (5:1-6:1) (C) God Commissions Moses: Second Narrative (6:2-7:7)

(D) The Ten Plagues (7:8-13:16)

(a) Introduction to the Plagues (7:8-13) (b) Triplet I (7:14-8:19)

Triplet II (8:20-9:12)

Triplet III (9:13-10:29)

The Tenth Plague: Death of the Egyptian Firstborn and Accompanying Rituals

(11:1-13:16)(E) The Destruction of the Egyptian Armies and the Thanksgiving of Miriam (13:17-15:21)

The Journey to Sinai and Canaan after the Egyp-

tians Have Been Destroyed (15:22-18:27) The First Test: Marah (15:22-27)

The Second Test: Quails and Manna (16:1-36)

The Third Test: Water (17:1-7)

The Defeat of the Amalekites (17:8-16) (e) Jethro's Blessing and Advice (18:1-27)

(II) Israel at Sinai (19:1-40:38)

(A) Solemn Concluding of the Covenant (19:1-24:18)

(a) Israel Encounters Yahweh at the Mountain (19:1-25)

The Ten Commandments (20:1-21)

The Covenant Code (20:22-23:33)

Injunctions regarding the shrine (20:22-26)

Judgments regarding Hebrew slaves (ii) (21:1-11)

Judgments concerning capital crimes (iii) 21:12-17)

Judgments concerning harm or death caused by humans, animals, or through neglect (21:18-36)

(v) Judgments concerning burglary and theft

Judgments concerning burning another's fields (22:5-6)

(vii) Judgments concerning culpability for deposited property (22:7-15)

(viii) Judgments concerning the seduction of a young woman (22:16-17)

Commands about various social and cultic matters (22:18-23:19)

The blessings of keeping the covenant (23:20-33)

(d) The Ratification of the Covenant (24:1-18) (B) Divine Command to Build and Maintain the

Dwelling (chaps. 25-31) The People Are to Give the Material for the

Dwelling (25:1-9) The Ark (25:10-22) The Table (25:23-30)

The Lampstand (25:31-40)

The Dwelling (26:1-37) The Altar (27:1-8)

The Court (27:9-19)

The Lamp (27:20-21)

Priestly Vestments (28:1-43)

The Consecration of Priests (29:1-46) Appendix (30:1-31:17)

Altar of incense (30:1-10)

Ransom ritual during a census (30:11-16)

The bronze laver (30:17-21) The anointing oil (30:22–33) The incense (30:34–38)

(vi) The selection of artisans (31:1-11) (vii) affirmation of the sabbath (31:12-17)

The Tablets of the Law are Given to Moses (31:18)

(C) Apostasy and Renewal of the Covenant (chaps.

(a) The People Make New Gods to Go with Them (32:1-6)

Yahweh Resolves to Destroy the People (32:7–14)

Moses Breaks the Tablets and Punishes the People (32:15-35)

The People Lament When They Learn Yahweh Is Not with Them (33:1-6)

Moses Places the Tent of Meeting outside the Camp (33:7-11)

Theophany of Yahweh in Response to Moses' Plea (33:12-23)

The Remaking of the Covenant (34:1-35)

(D) Building of the Dwelling and the Descent of the Glory (chaps. 35-40)

(a) The People Build the Dwelling (35:1-39:43)

(b) Dedication Rites (40:1-38)

COMMENTARY

(I) The Hebrews Freed from Pharaoh in Egypt (1:1-15:21).

(A) Danger (1:1-2:22). These chapters tell a single story: how the fulfillment of Yahweh's promise to the patriarchs of progeny and of land has made a threat to Pharaoh. He controls their birth rate and makes them remain in Egypt as slave laborers, decisions contrary to the divine promise. Chap. 1 tells of the marvelous increase of the people and Pharaoh's attack; chap. 2, of the beginnings of rescue through Moses.

(a) Israel's Children Become a Numerous PEOPLE IN EGYPT (1:1-7 [P]). Verses 1-5 look back to

Gen, when famine forced the family to leave the promised land and sojourn in Egypt. The 70 are named in Gen 46:8-27. The death of Joseph, the protector of the little family, and the deaths of his brothers and of the Pharaoh friendly to Joseph (v 8) are a major turning point in the story. Similar language in Judg 2:8-10 describes the turn from the conquest to the tribal period. 7. The descendants of Israel are no longer the 12 sons and their families as in vv 1-5; they are now a people in whom the blessings of fertility promised to the patriarchs (Gen 12:1-3 and 28:13-15 among other places) are coming true.

(b) PHARAOH'S FIRST ASSAULT: OPPRESSIVE

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journey to the

nges his tradirescue of the 15:21) and the 3). The journey formula "they at place name b." y while still in 7; 13:20; 14:2); e two halves of led in purposee seventh stage ies. The people 0:10, receiving Labor (1:8-14 [J: 8-12] [P: 13-14]). The fecundity of the people threatens Pharaoh, who fears they will outnumber native Egyptians on his northeast border, side with his enemies, and "go up from the land," i.e., escape. God will counter Pharaoh's plan to keep the people from their rightful land when he commissions Moses in 3:8, "I will cause them to go up from that land." 11. If, as this commentary proposes, the exodus took place during the 19th Dynasty, in the reign of Ramses II (1290-1224), then Raamses (Egyptian pr-Rmssw, "house of Ramses") is almost certainly Tell el-Dab'a-Qantir (ca. 16 mi. S of Tanis, the capital of the 20th and 21st Dynasties, and ca. 24 mi. NE of Bubastis, the capital of the 22nd Dynasty). Recent excavation by the Austrian Archaeological Institute has demonstrated that Ramses II founded Raamses on the site of the old Hyksos capital Avaris when the Pelusian arm of the Nile was still navigable. Raamses later lost its access to the sea through changes in the south water course, and the great city was abandoned. The Tanitic arm to the west gained in water volume at the expense of the Pelusian arm, inviting succeeding pharaohs to build Tanis (the Gk name; Hebr Zoan) and then Bubastis as capitals on the Tanitic arm; they used the abandoned Raamses as a quarry for their building projects. The substantial monuments of Ramses II found by archaeologists in Tanis and Bubastis, shown by recent excavation to be secondary to these sites, have misled many scholars to identify Raamses with Tanis. Pithom (Pr-tm, "house or temple of the god Atum") has not yet been identified. Neither of the two sites proposed in the Wadi Tumilat (ca. 25 mi. SE of Tell el-Dab'a-Qantir)-Tell el-Maskhutah and Tell el-Ratabah-is certain (on these sites and their relation to the route of the exodus, → 23 below; M. Bietak, Tell el-Dab'a II [Vienna, 1975] 179-221). 12-14. Construction of the store cities does not check the population. The Hebrews' mysterious and unexpected growth frightens the Egyptians, who impose on them more rigorous work; "rigor" and "work" occur seven times here.

(c) Pharaoh's Second Assault: Killing of THE MALE CHILDREN (1:15-22 [E]). The king, having failed to thwart the blessing by oppressive labor, now instructs the midwives to the Hebr women to kill all the male children. From the context, the midwives seem to be Egyptians, not Hebrews; the phrase can be translated, "the midwives to the Hebr women." By their Godfearing refusal to commit murder, the women join the ranks of other non-Israelites in the Bible who acknowledge God's favor to the people: Abimelech in Gen 20:17 and Pharaoh's daughter in Exod 2:1-10. In the folkloric perspective of the story, the king addresses the midwives directly, without the elaborate ceremonial of royal protocol. The women have only their wit and decency, but these suffice. Pharaoh's folly is shown by his eliminating those whom he most needed for his royal building projects-the men; he is afflicted with the typical dementia of the doomed wicked. His decision to cast every male into the Nile prepares for the story of Moses.

(d) THE BIRTH OF MOSES (2:1-10 [E]). The hidden yet divinely guided origins of a great leader is a motif attested elsewhere, e.g., Sargon of Agade of the late third millennium was placed in a basket of rush (ANET 119). An Egyptian myth speaks of the goddess Isis concealing the infant Horus in a delta papyrus thicket to save him from death at the hands of Seth (M. Greenberg, Understanding Exodus, 198-99). 1-4. The mother and sister of Moses obey Pharaoh's command to the letter: they throw the child into the Nile. Like the midwives, they do not let the tyrant's commands limit their choices or hope. The sister positions herself so that she can find out what will happen to the boy. 5-10. In the second half of the drama, Pharaoh's daughter spots the child and makes arrangements to bring him up at the royal court. She names him Moses, a name that the writer relates through a folk etymology to Hebrew māšā, "to draw out." Moses is really a shortened Egyptian name meaning "born of"; the element is found in names like Tutmoses. Pharaoh ends up educating Moses. Yahweh's care for his people is subtle and unspoken to this point. Nonetheless, kings in their folly are overthrown.

(e) Moses Flees Egypt and Settles in MIDIAN (2:11-22 [J]). 11-15. Moses is conscious of being a Hebrew despite his court upbringing. With full intent ("he looked this way and that"), he kills the Egyptian oppressor, only to find that the act makes him unwelcome to his own people. He cannot give an answer to the question, "Who made you a prince and judge over us?" Moses flees to the land of the Midianites, a tribe that inhabited variously Transjordan and the south of Canaan, where his righteous acts win him a wife and where the question about who made him a judge will be answered. 16-22. The well is the meeting place for future husbands and wives, as in Gen 24 and 29:1-14. Here Moses shows to his future family who he is: an Egyptian in Midian and their savior.

(B) God Commissions Moses: First Narra-11

tive (2:23-6:1).

(a) THE CRIES OF THE PEOPLE COME UP TO God (2:23-25 [P]). The one actor who has been silent up to now is dramatically introduced: God is named five times in three verses. The Pharaoh who did not know Joseph (1:8) and who persecuted the Hebrews has died, another turning point in the story, like that after the death of Jacob's sons and the friendly Pharaoh in 1:6. Moses, destined by the circumstances of birth for a great task yet unable in Egypt to effect anything for his people, dwells as a resident alien in Midian. Touched by the suffering of his people, God remembers the covenant with the ancestors, by which he promised progeny and

land to this people's descendants.

(b) THE CALL OF MOSES AT THE MOUNTAIN OF God (3:1-4:17 [J: 3:1-4a,5,7-8,16-22; 4:1-16] [E: 3:4b,6,9-15; 4:17]). In chaps. 1 and 2, Pharaoh has behaved as a god toward the people; he has tried to annul both the promise of numerous progeny, by imposing harsh labor (1:8-14) and killing all the firstborn males (1:15-22), and the promise of the land, by refusing to let the people go up to their land (1:10). For the upcoming conflict God will have his servants, Moses and Aaron, and Pharaoh will have his, the magicians (7:11,22; 8:7,18-19). Dominion over the Hebrews, about whom they fight, is conceived spatially. In Egypt the people serve Pharaoh; they must leave Egypt to serve Yahweh. In Sinai (and later, Canaan), they will be Yahweh's. Moses, like other servants in the Bible, e.g., Gideon in Judg 6 and Jeremiah in Jer 1:4-10, is reluctant. His reluctance, expressed in four objections, must be overcome through signs and dialogue with God (3:1-12,13-22; 4:1-9,10-17). 3:1-6. God appears to Moses on the mountain of God (called Sinai in J and P; Horeb in E and Deut). The bush (Hebr seneh, a play on Sinai) that burns but is not consumed mediates the divine voice. Moses recognizes the holiness of the place, hears his name spoken, and meets the God of the fathers. 7-12. Verses 7-8 from the J source are duplicated by the E source in vv 9-10. God intervenes because he has seen and heard the cry of the suffering people (cf. 2:23-25) and wishes to lead them out of Egypt. Moses balks at the divine sending, "Who am I to go ...?" God's answer in v 12 is enigmatic. In other biblical commissions such as that to Gideon in Judg 6:36-40, the sign is a sample of divine nughter spots him up at the ame that the to Hebrew a shortened ment is found up educating s subtle and in their folly

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power prior to its full display in the divine act; it is intended to encourage the person called to carry out the mission. Here, uniquely in the Bible, the sign is after the event, to validate it as divinely intended: "You shall serve God upon this mountain" (3:12; cf. 19:2). Some scholars propose that the "I will be with you" of v 12a, God's closeness to Moses shown in miracles and intercessory powers, is the sign. At any rate, Moses does not receive prior signs like ordinary prophets. 13-15. Moses' second objection is that the people will not believe that he speaks for God; hence, he asks for the name of the mysterious voice. The divine name manifests God to the worshiper; the old name, God of the father, is not adequate for the new age. "I am who I am" is the name Yahweh transposed into the first person; it suggests here free choice and unhindered power. In the perspective of E (and of P in 6:2-7:7, esp. 6:2-4), God revealed himself as Yahweh for the first time to Moses. For J, on the other hand, people had always called upon the name of Yahweh (Gen 4:26). The etymology of the name Yahweh is disputed. It is surely a form of the verb "to be" (hāyâ) and probably the causative form, "cause to be, create." Some scholars suggest that it is a shortened form of a sentence name, "(God who) creates (the heavenly host)" (F. M. Cross, CMHE 60-75; B. S. Childs, Exodus 60-64; D. J. McCarthy, CBQ 40 [1978] 311-22). 16-22. God reveals his plans to Moses (Amos 3:7): The elders' acceptance of his commission, Pharaoh's refusal to let them go into the wilderness to worship Yahweh, and his battle and defeat by Yahweh. Yahweh's victorious people will plunder the defeated Egyptians; vv 21-22 are a witty adaptation of the victor's taking the clothing and jewelry of a defeated army (cf. Josh 7:21; Judg 5:30; 2 Chr 20:25). It is also compensation for their unpaid labor. 4:1-9. To Moses' third objection, that people will not believe him, God responds with three signs, demonstrations of the divine power that Moses can count on in the future. The rod-turned-snake and the Nile-turned-bloody anticipate the first plague in 7:8-24, and his leprous hand looks forward to Moses' vindication as leader in Num 12. 4:10-17. The Lord answers Moses' fourth objection that he is not "a man of words" by declaring, "I am Yahweh," who creates the organs of perceiving and speaking; he will surely empower Moses. Moses resists the divine empowering (v 13), asking that another be sent in his place. Having responded patiently to each of Moses' objections up to this point, Yahweh finally is angered by Moses' attempt to push the mission onto someone else. A helper is given: Aaron. God will put his words into Aaron's mouth (v 15) rather than Moses' (v 12). Verse 17 speaks of the rod with which Moses will initiate the plagues, reminding the reader that Moses and Aaron act for God as well as speak for him.

13 (c) Moses Returns to Egypt (4:18–26 []: 19-20a,21-26] [E: 18,20b]). Moses leaves Midian in order to return to Egypt and carry out the divine commission. Given leave by his father-in-law to return and informed by Yahweh that the coast is clear (vv 18-20), he is told to act and speak with the divine power (vv 21-23). Verse 21 parallels vv 22-23. The wonders will lead to Pharaoh's hardness of heart. The words "let my firstborn go" will provoke Pharaoh's refusal (interpreting v. 23 as "yet [not if] you refuse . . ."). Verses 24-26 vividly illustrate the popular belief that the firstborn son is owed to Yahweh, not to Pharaoh. Whatever the origins of the story—perhaps an old story of a night demon fooled by the blood from someone other than the intended victim-its intent is to point forward to the tenth and final plague (12:29-32) and to the redemption of the Israelite firstborn (13:1-2,11-16). Like Moses' mother

and sister, who saved him by their daring and wit, Zipporah in the face of sudden danger quickly daubs her sleeping husband's penis ("feet" in v 25, a euphemism) with the blood from the circumcision of her firstborn son and so averts the danger (Childs, Exodus 90–107).

14 (d) INITIAL ACCEPTANCE BY AARON AND THE

(d) INITIAL ACCEPTANCE BY AARON AND THE ELDERS (4:27–31 [J]). Aaron meets Moses as foretold in the commission (4:15). True to that commission, he now speaks and acts for Moses before the clders. The elders recognize that God has come to rescue them. The divine compassion and resolve (2:23–25), revealed first to Moses, then to Aaron, are now seen by the elders who represent the people. But will Pharaoh believe?

(e) THE FIRST MEETING WITH PHARAOH (5:1-6:1 [J]). Yahweh had foretold that the people would believe Moses but that Pharaoh would not (3:16-22). Pharaoh perversely interprets the people's desire to worship Yahweh in the wilderness as shirking. He accordingly forces the people to gather the straw themselves without reducing the old quota. His clever strategy divides people from leader (v 21), leading to Moses' desperate prayer in 5:22-6:1. At this moment of increased oppression and disbelief and of Moses' discouragement, there is heard the divine promise in 6:1: I will arrange things so that Pharaoh will drive you out of Egypt! The divine promise at the nadir of Hebrew fortunes in Egypt ends the first panel of the call and preparation of Moses and of the people (3:1-6:1). A parallel panel (6:2-7:7) will tell the story a second time, in a condensed way. The second panel, like the first, begins with the self-presentation of Yahweh (6:2-8) and ends with the divine promise (7:3-5). Hebr rhetoric loves parallelism-of poetic lines, of personages (Dame Wisdom // Dame Folly in Prov; here Yahweh // Pharaoh), of lengthy sections (Exod 15:1-12 // 13-18; and the two panels of 2:23-6:1 // 6:2-7:7).

(C) God Commissions Moses. Second Narrative (6:2-7:7 [P]). P tells again the events of 3:1-6:1 (J-E) - from the commission of Moses to initial confrontation with Pharaoh - with typical emphasis that all is divinely foreseen and controlled. The repetition shows that the preparatory period is completed; the plagues begin in 7:8. According to P, God was known to the patriarchs as El Shadday, "God Almighty" (Gen 17:1; 35:11; 48:3), and only at Sinai revealed his true name, Yahweh. He now remembers his covenantal promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give them the land of Canaan. Land is here emphasized because dominion is conceived spatially; only when they live in Canaan (and Sinai) will the people be fully servants of Yahweh. The people do not believe (6:9), a telescoping of the more complex picture in 4:27-6:1, where the people first believe and then falter because of Pharaoh's strategy. Verses 10-13 (reprised in 6:28-7:2) compress Moses' objections and the appointment of Aaron as his spokesman in 3:1-4:17. Verse 13 is the divine answer to Moses' complaint that he is inarticulate: "So the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron and instructed them. . . . ' Verses 14-25 identify Moses and Aaron for the first time according to their lineage; identity in the ancient Near East was through family. Like Gen 46:8-27 and other biblical genealogies, the genealogy begins with Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, the oldest of Jacob's sons, but focuses on Levi and on others important in the Pentateuch: Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu (Exod 24:1,9), Korah and his sons (Num 16), and Phineas (Num 25). 6:28-7:7 is a precise prediction of what will happen between God and Pharaoh, told from the divine rather than the human perspective. The phrase "I will harden Pharaoh's heart" leaves human actors out of consideration in order to highlight God's control. Other texts

underscore human freedom and so phrase divine-human relations differently: e.g., "But Pharaoh hardened his heart, and would not listen to them" (8:15). In the end, the Egyptians will acknowledge that Yahweh is supreme in his act of bringing his people out of Egypt (7:5). P completes the section by giving the ages of Moses and Aaron, a device to show the definitive end of the section. (D) The Ten Plagues (7:8-13:16). The third major section describes the battle between Yahweh and Pharaoh for the service of the Hebrews. "Service," in both Hebr and Eng, means both work and worship. The redactor has skillfully arranged and augmented old traditions about seven plagues (cf. the seven in Pss 78:43-51; 105:26-36 and the fact that there are only seven plagues in J) into three triplets, and the climactic tenth plague is outside the series.

Blood 4. Flies
 Frogs
 Pestilence
 Locusts
 Gnats
 Fever boils
 Darkness
 Instruction
 Death
 Locusts
 firstborn

Each triplet has a similar structure. In the first plague of each triplet, God tells Moses to present himself to Pharaoh in the morning at the Nile to warn him of the danger (7:15; 8:20; 9:13); in the second, God sends Moses into Pharaoh's palace to warn him (8:1; 9:1; 10:1); and in the third, God commands Moses and Aaron to start the plagues without warning (8:16; 9:8; 10:21). Each triplet has a distinctive motif, alluded to by the charge made in the first plague: (1) the superiority of God and his agents (7:17; 8:10,18-19); (2) God's presence in the land, shown by his shielding his people's land from the plagues (8:22; 9:4,6); (3) God's incomparability (9:14), suggested also by the statement that the like of the plagues had never been seen before (9:18,24; 10:6,14). The plagues are both a punishment inflicted upon Pharaoh for his refusal to let the people go (the emphasis of J) and a demonstration of God's power in holy war (the emphasis of P; cf. M. Greenberg, Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William Foxwell Albright [ed. H. Goedicke; Baltimore, 1971] 243-52; R. R. Wilson, CBQ 41 [1979] 18-36). Attempts have been made to find natural explanations for the plagues, e.g., the bloody Nile is caused by red algae; the gnats are a natural consequence of the festering bodies of the frogs (e.g., J. L. Mihelic and G. E. Wright, IDB 3, 822-24), but the emphasis in the Bible is on their stunning and unrepeatable character. God's manipulation of natural elements is a narrative way of revealing his sole divinity. Instead of an objective description of the miraculous phenomenon followed by interpretive remarks, which a modern Western historian might favor, the biblical author combines event and interpretation by selecting and omitting narrative detail. The plagues are treated similarly in Pss 78 and 105.

(a) Introduction to the Plagues (7:8-13 The P redactor sets the stage and introduces the actors for the ten-act conflict: Yahweh and his servants Moses and Aaron versus Pharaoh and his servants the magicians. The servants of Pharaoh by the third plague have ceased to be rivals of Moses ("This is the finger of God," 8:15) and by the sixth plague can no longer be in his service (9:11). By the eighth plague, they have recognized that Yahweh has defeated Pharaoh (10:7). Pharaoh, however, hardens his heart (in the Bible the organ of decision) and refuses to acknowledge that Yahweh is the sole God because of his signs and wonders. 19 (b) TRIPLET I (7:14-8:19). The first plague: blood (7:14-24 [J: 14-18,20b,21a,23-24] [P: 19,20a, 21b,22]). As in the first plagues of the other triplets, God sends Moses to Pharaoh in the morning to warn him of the danger, but Pharaoh refuses to listen. Yahweh

demands that Pharaoh allow the people to go into the wilderness, i.e., to leave Pharaoh's domain that they might worship him. P characteristically heightens the effects of the plague (v 19), underlining human obedience and divine foreknowledge (vv 20a,22). The second plague: frogs (7:25-8:15 [J: 7:25-8:4,8-15a] [P: 8:5-7]). Like the other second plagues in the triplets, God sends Moses into the palace to warn Pharaoh. Pharaoh, entreating Moses to pray for the removal of the frogs, is allowed to name the time of their removal to emphasize Yahweh's complete control (8:9-11). The third plague: gnats (8:16-19 [P]). In the third plague of each triplet, Yahweh commands Moses and Aaron to initiate the plague without warning. The magicians hitherto had been able to duplicate the sign but now must confess their failure, the climax of the first third of the plagues. (c) TRIPLET II (8:20-9:12). The fourth plague: flies (8:20-32 [J]). The motif of God's presence with his people is sounded in the charge to Pharaoh (8:22; cf. 9:4,6). 22. Goshen is the area in the northeast Delta where the Hebrews lived (→ Genesis, 2:70). The sign is not simply the insect swarms but also the protection of Goshen from the plague; Yahweh begins to differentiate between his own people and Egypt. 25-29. Moses shows his cunning; he genuinely wants to worship Yahweh in the wilderness, outside of Pharaoh's domain, but he wants a three-day headstart. The fifth plague: pestilence (9:1-7 [J]). In the pestilence affecting livestock, God again makes a distinction between his people and the Egyptians. The sixth plague: fever boils (9:8-12 [P]). The concerns of P are apparent: attention to Moses' human counterparts, the magicians; to the sovereignty of the Lord, who hardens the heart of Pharaoh; and to the divinely foreseen disobedience of Pharaoh.

(d) TRIPLET III (9:13-10:29). The seventh plague: hail (9:13-35 []]). The hail is part of a thunderstorm, the appropriate context for the revelation of the storm-god Yahweh. 27. The language is forensic, not ethical: "I am guilty this time. The Lord is in the right and I and my people are in the wrong." 31. The mention of the crops suggests an early spring date and also explains why there were crops for the locusts of the next plague (10:5). The eighth plague: locusts (10:1-20 [J]). 1-2. Yahweh declares he has hardened Pharaoh's heart to show his power in the signs. Verses 3-4 stress the choice offered to Pharaoh, and vv 7 and 16, his willfulness. The ninth plague: darkness (10:21-29 [J]). Darkness in the Bible is terrifying, the condition of the world before it was created (Gen 1:2); human life is impossible without light. Pharaoh still tries to force the Hebrews' return by retaining their cattle (v 24), as he had earlier tried to hold their children hostage (10:10). Moses is equal to his wiles; he claims he needs the cattle for sacrifice (vv 25-26). 27-29. Pharaoh himself decides never to see Moses again, preparing for the climax.

(e) THE TENTH PLAGUE: DEATH OF THE 22 EGYPTIAN FIRSTBORN AND ACCOMPANYING RITUALS (11:1-13:16 [J: 11:1-8; 12:21-23,27b,29-39] [P: 11:9-10; 12:1-20,28,40-51; 13:1-16] [E: 12:24-27a²]). The tenth plague is climactic not only by its position outside the triplet series but also by the prefatory prediction in 11:1 that Pharaoh will at last let them go. The spoiling of the Egyptians was the last act of the scenario given to Moses in 3:21-22. That Pharaoh will drive them out (11:1), an unusually strong and reiterated phrase, echoes the last verse of the first commission narrative in 6:1, "With a strong hand he will send you forth and with a strong hand he will expel you." Further, 4:21-26 had condensed all the plagues into the tenth plague. Such references back to the divine prediction signal the completion of the rescue of the Hebrews.

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The seventh s part of a ne revelation e is forensic, ord is in the ng." 31. The ing date and ocusts of the ısts (10:1-20 ed Pharaoh's es 3-4 stress and 16, his 0:21-29 [J]). idition of the numan life is s to force the 24), as he had tage (10:10). eds the cattle mself decides he climax. ATH OF THE ING RITUALS 5,29-39] [P: 12:24-27a?]). y its position fatory predicthem go. The of the scenario oh will drive ind reiterated t commission will send you you." Further, into the tenth ine prediction the Hebrews. Verses 4-9 are addressed to Pharaoh, as v 8 shows. Yahweh will go forth in the midst of Egypt, present more forcefully than in any other plague. Moses leaves Pharaoh in hot anger, a mark of Pharaoh's obduracy but also of Moses' increasing mastery. 12:1-20. Before the occurrence of the climactic plague of deliverance for Egypt, P introduces the rites of the Passover lamb (vv 3-13) and of the unleavened bread, massôt (vv 14-20). The two rites were originally separate. The first was a rite of herders to propitiate the gods when they moved from the well-watered winter pastures to the arid summer ones. The second was a rite of farmers, a kind of spring cleaning of the previous year's old leaven. The text connects the lamb sacrifice with the exodus (vv 11-13). The unleavened bread is made a memorial of the exodus in the narrative itself (12:34) and in an accompanying instruction (13:3-10). 12:1-20 are the words of Yahweh to Moses, and vv 21-27 are the transmission of those commands to the elders, such divine commands and their transmissions being a favorite P device. P includes the rituals for the Passover lamb and the unleavened bread (12:1-28,43-51; 13:1-16) within the tenth plague, between announcement and fulfillment. Celebrated at the spring new year, the rituals enable Israelites of each succeeding generation to participate in the escape from Pharaoh's dominion (R. de Vaux, AI 484-93). 12:37-39. P gives the first of his 12 rubrics for the journey; the journey to Canaan begins within Pharaoh's Egypt, an instance of Yahweh's mastery over every land. 12:37. The first stage of the journey was from Raamses to Succoth. Succoth has been identified by some scholars with Tell el-Maskhutah and with Tell el-Ratabah, two cities in the Wadi Tumilat within 10 mi. of each other and ca. 25 mi. SE of Raamses. Succoth is said to be a Hebr adaptation of the Egyptian Tkw(t), the civil name of the eighth lower Egyptian nome, which may be Tell el-Maskhutah; the general similarity of the names, however, is not compelling evidence for an identification. Recent archaeological work, sensitive at once to archaeology, the shifting ancient drainage of the Delta, and the different identifications of the stations attested in early Judaism (e.g., Jdt, the LXX, and the targums), has offered a plausible reconstruction of the route. For the Hebrews escaping from Raamses, there was virtually only one route that avoided the Egyptian observation posts S of Lake Balah and the important fortress at Zilu astride the Way of the Philistines; that route led through the swampy regions of Lake Balah. This shallow lake has the best claim to be Yam Sup—lit., "Sea of Reeds" but conventionally and wrongly translated since the LXX "Red Sea." In 14:1, the people are directed back to Pi-ha-hiroth (unidentified) which is in front of Baal-Zephon. Baal-Zephon may be modern Defenne (Gk Daphne). Exod 14:4 suggests that the Hebrews turned back to Baal-Zephon deliberately to provoke Pharaoh to chase them through swampy areas of Lake Balah and set the stage for the ultimate battle and

Later biblical literature identified the places on the basis of the geography of its time. Ps 78:12,43, e.g., uses the Egyptian phrase "fields of Zoan (Tanis)." Tanis was the residence of the pharaohs of the 21st Dynasty (1065–935) but is an anachronism for the 13th cent. Other books and the LXX use the geography of their time, e.g., the LXX of 1:11 identifies one of the store cities as Heliopolis, a city on the Wadi Tumilat. So a literary tradition of a northern and a southern route developed within the Bible. It seems that the northern was the actual one (→ 7 above; Biblical Geography, 73:24–29; also Bietak, Tell el-Dab'a II 135–37; and W. H. Schmidt, Exodus, Sinai und Mose 26–28).

12:38. A mixed multitude—not only the 24 Hebrews but others—necessitated the adaptation of the Passover for outsiders in vv 43-49. 40-42. The 430 years probably reflects the P chronology of generations in Egypt in Gen 15:16 and presupposed in Exod 6:14-20; each generation seems to be 100 years here as befits patriarchs, and not the usual 40. This is suggested by Gen 15:13, which says that the oppression in Egypt will last 400 years, and by 15:16, which predicts that the people will come back in the fourth generation. 13:1-2, 11-16. Like the Passover lamb and the unleavened bread in chap. 12, the customary consecration of the firstborn is connected to the exodus. Sometimes children were directly sacrificed to the gods; the practice is directly attested by the excavations of the Phoenician colony of Carthage and indirectly in mainland Phoenicia. The word "redeem" (pdh, vv 13,15) elsewhere means God's rescue of Israel from Egypt; here it is used in a more restricted sense of a ransom. As in 12:25-27 and Deut 6:20-25, the child's question in a family setting occasions the explanation. 16. The metaphor of keeping the law before one's eyes was eventually taken literally and led to the later Jewish practice of wearing phylacteries. 13:3-10 parallel vv 11-16 in relating the unleavened bread to settlement in Canaan and to the law.

(E) The Destruction of the Egyptian Armies and the Thanksgiving of Miriam (13:17-15:21 [P: 14:1-4,8-10*,15-18,21-23,26,28-29] [J: 13:20-22; 14:5b-6,13-14,19b-20,24-25b,27,30-31; 15:20-21] [E: 13:17-19; 14:5a,7,11-12,19a,25a] [special source 15:1-19]). Pharaoh's grip on the enslaved Hebrews has been loosened by the ten plagues, and the tenth plague and the exodus have been ritualized for later generations. Now Pharaoh and his army must be utterly destroyed in holy war (14:28). After the great victory, the whole people sing a song of thanksgiving, like other songs in the OT in celebration of divine victories. 17-18. The best route for the people is not the Way of the Philistines – the most direct, but guarded by the fortress at Zilu-but rather a route through the wilderness at the Sea of Reeds, a swampy area around Lake Balah, as suggested above (→ 23). 19. In Gen 50:22-26, Joseph made his brothers swear that they would take his bones with them when God "will visit you." The transfer of the bones is a sign that "the visitation" has taken place. 20. The second of P's stages, corresponding to Num 33:6. 14:1-4. P's third stage, from Num 33:7, means reversing direction. None of the locations, except Baal-Zephon, probably modern Defenne (Gk Daphne), can be located. Defenne seems to be on the highway leading NE to Zilu. Yahweh brings the people back to the main road, where they will be seen and pursued by Pharaoh's army. Yahweh is provoking them so as to "get glory" (v 4), i.e., be recognized as the only powerful deity by his decisive victory over Egypt and its gods. 5-9. Pharaoh rises to the bait. He will pursue the people, who he thinks are trapped in the wilderness (v 3). 10-14. As Yahweh predicted in selecting the route (13:17), the people have a change of heart when they see war; they want to return to Egypt. Moses exhorts them in vv 13-14 to prepare for holy war. In holy war, the gods fought in the heavens in support of their armies on earth. Since Yahweh is the only true deity, Israel's victory is assured. The people have only to avoid panic and be confident in the coming victory. 15-31. The battle is conceived by each source differently. According to P, Moses divided the sea by the rod and Israel walked through on dry land, the waters being a wall to their right and left. When Israel got to the other side, Moses raised his hand and the walls of water crashed in on the Egyptian army, wiping them out. According to J, Yahweh the storm-god drove back the sea long enough for Israel to cross in the night and then the sea returned to its wonted flow in the morning. The language is like Ps 48:5-8, where Yahweh throws the kings into a panic ("discomfort" in v 24) and uses the wind as his weapon. Victory in any case belongs to Yahweh alone. The Song of the Sea (15:1-18) is an ancient thanksgiving. In the Bible one renders thanks by reciting publicly what God has done; the public report of the rescue makes known on earth the glory God has in heaven (cf. Pss 18,30,118, 138). The hymn praises Yahweh for raising the storm that overturned Pharaoh's boats and for leading the people to his holy mountain. The song gives a version of the exodus-conquest different from the prose accounts of the Pentateuch and Josh: Yahweh's storm capsizes the Egyptian boats and he leads the people immediately to his holy mountain in Canaan, his presence at their head throwing the natives into a panic. The song is divided into two panels, the annihilation of the Egyptians (vv 4-12) and the procession to the holy mountain (vv 13-18). 1-3. Verse 21 attributes the song to Miriam rather than to Moses - a more original attribution, since well-known figures in literary tradition tended to attract to themselves other's traditions. 4-10. Yahweh, like Baal in the Ugaritic texts, is pictured as a storm-god battling his enemies with wind, lightning, and thunder. Verse 8 should not be read as a parallel of the P account in 14:22-28; the picture rather is like Ps 107:25-27, a storm that lifts high mountains of water. 11-12. Yahweh's victory over Egypt demonstrates that he is superior to their gods in heaven; he controls heaven, earth, and the underworld. "Earth" in v 12b is the underworld. 13-18. The people are a victorious army on the march, fearless because their God leads them. The natives panic, offering no resistance as the people march to Yahweh's mountain shrine. "Your holy encampment" (v 13), "the mount of your heritage," and "the sanctuary" (v 17) would be understood by later generations as Jerusalem, the site of the Temple on Mount Zion. The poem however is older than David's conquest of Jerusalem in the early 10th cent. The holy mountain shrine of Yahweh might refer to the whole land as Yahweh's mountain, as in Deut 32:13; Ezek 39:4,17; etc. In Ps 78:54 the same phrase refers to Shiloh, the shrine prior to Jerusalem. The verbs in vv 16-17 are preterite, not future: "when your people, O Yahweh, crossed over the waters to Canaan." The last verse is a prayer that the royal rule of Yahweh, demonstrated in the destruction of Egypt and the leading of his people to himself, be always available to Israel (Cross, CMHE 112-44).

(F) The Journey to Sinai and Canaan after the Egyptians Have Been Destroyed (15:22-18:27).

(a) THE FIRST TEST: MARAH (15:22-27 [P: 22a,27] [J: 22a-25a] [special source: 25b,26]). According to the fourth of P's journey rubrics, the people leave the Sea of Reeds and go to the Wilderness of Shur. P several times collapses several place-names in Num 33 into the phrase "wilderness of PN." This is the first of many stories of Yahweh testing the people in the wilderness. God puts humans in a position where they must show their true allegiance; God may test humans but humans may not test God. All the tests in the wilderness concern either food and drink for the people or Moses' authority. At Marah (Hebr "bitter") the people cannot drink the bitter waters and "murmured." The word occurs only in Exod 15-17 and Num 14-17 (and in Josh 9:18). It means complaining against Moses and Aaron regarding the divine nurture or guidance in the wilderness. Will the people allow Yahweh to be their God by trusting that he will feed and rule them? In this first trial (other water stories are Exod 17:2-7 and Num 20:1-13), a deliberate reference is made to the first of the Egyptian plagues, the bloody waters of the Nile that the Egyptians could not drink (cf. 7:18,21,24). Egypt (in the person of the Pharaoh) hardened its heart and the plagues ensued. If Israel opens its heart, then its fate will be different from the Egyptians' for it will experience Yahweh as healer (v 26) rather than sender of plagues. As Yahweh showed his power to the Egyptians in the ten signs and wonders, so he will test Israel in the wilderness ten times (Exod 15:22-27; 16; 17:2-7; Num 11; 12; 13-14; 16; 17; 20:1-13; 21:4-9). The episode ends in well-watered abundance, a harbinger of the later happy

ending of the journey.

(b) THE SECOND TEST: QUAILS AND MANNA (16:1-36 [P: 1-3,6-27,32-35a] [J: 4-5,28-31,35b,36]). The second test pairs manna with quails according to the frequent biblical word pair "meat/lfood (or bread)." The story is told also in Num 11 in another version and in Pss 105:40 and 78:17-31; in Ps 78 the quails turn out to be poisonous, killing those who had craved them. Here the quails do not figure prominently in the story and in fact are not mentioned after v 13; the story is about the manna. This omission is surprising in the light of the ominous predictions in vv 6-12. Further, the story seems to presuppose that the Tent of Meeting and the Ark were already in existence (in vv 33-34 and probably in vv 9-10); the Glory ordinarily appeared through them. The redactor has apparently placed a version of the story of quail and manna on the way to Sinai. In accord with P's view that the people heard the law at Sinai for the first time, they are not punished for transgressions, as they will be after Sinai in Num 11. Rather, P connects the manna with sabbath observance, which for him was instituted at the creation (Gen 2:2-3). 1. The fourth of P's journey stages. None of the places can be certainly identified. 2-5. The people murmur against Moses and Aaron but their complaint is ultimately against Yahweh; they prefer Pharaoh's sustenance in Egypt to Yahweh's in the wilderness. As in the other pre-Sinai trials (15:25; 17:5-6), Yahweh simply accedes to the request without rebuke. The people here are tested on their willingness to follow the instruction regarding the manna; sacred food must be gathered according to divine rubrics. Verses 16-27 are the P instruction corresponding to the brief J instructions in vv 4-5 and 28-30. 6-9. The confusion in the text—the doubling of vv 6-7 in vv 8 and 12 and the sequence of actions-cannot easily be resolved. Verses 6-7 are ominous, the preface to a story that must originally have included death from the quails. In this version of the story, the people will know Yahweh, confess him as God, when they experience again the control of nature and history shown already in the plagues and the exodus. Verse 8 is best translated, "And Moses continued, 'Yes, it will be in the very giving to you in the evening of the meat to eat and in the morning of food to sate yourself because Yahweh has heard. . . " After Sinai, Israel would "come near before Yahweh" (v 9) before the Tent of Meeting, but here the location is left unspecified, as is the location of the Glory in v 10. 13-30. The quail is coturnix coturnix, a small migratory bird about 71/2 inches long, brown or sandy with yellowish streaks. It comes to Palestine and Sinai in March or April in great flocks. It usually follows the wind, but if the wind suddenly shifts, the entire flock may be forced to land, where, exhausted, it is easily caught. Manna is the name for the bread from heaven, derived by folk etymology from man hû', "What is it?" even though correct Hebr would be mâ hû'. Manna is the honeylike dropping from the tamarisk tree of Palestine and Sinai, which the bedouin of the Sinai call mann. The droppings from the tamarisk are secretions from ends in

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two kinds of scale lice, which suck large quantities of liquid from the twigs in spring in order to collect nitrogen for their grubs. It contains glucose and fructose but no protein and cannot be harvested in quantity. The Bible portrays manna as miraculous; it is not an every-day occurrence. The rubrics for dealing safely with heavenly food are twice disregarded by the people (vv 20 and 27), a hint of later disobedience to the law. The violations of the sabbath earn a rebuke in vv 28–29. 31–36. Verse 32 enables later generations of Israel to see how Yahweh led them through the wilderness.

(c) THE THIRD TEST: WATER (17:1-7 [P: 1] [J: 2,4-7] [E: 3]). In 15:22-27, the people could not drink the bitter water; here there is no water at all. P has telescoped the place-names of Num 33:12-13, Dophkah and Alush, into one: Rephidim. 2-4. The people demand water and attack Moses. To Moses their quarrel is with God directly: they do not believe he can feed them, i.e., be their God in the wilderness. 5-7. Again, there is no divine rebuke but only the command to take some of the elders and go to the rock, which, when struck with the rod, will yield abundant water. The elders represent the people and are witnesses. The final verse, "Is Yahweh present among us or not?" sums up perfectly what it means to test God. Meribah, which plays on the Hebr root rîb, "to quarrel," is the site of the dispute about the water at the end of the journey in Num 20:1-13. Massâ is derived from the Hebr vb. nissâ, "to test." According to Num 27:14 and Deut 32:51, Meribah is a spring at Kadesh in the Negeb. Yahweh gives bread from heaven and water from the rock to this people in the wilderness; he thus proves his mastery over the hostile environment. (d) The Defeat of the Amalekites (17:8–16 The Amalekites are mentioned as a fierce tribe in the vicinity of Kadesh in Gen 14:7; Num 13:29; 14:25. Moses defeats them by stretching out over them the rod he used to defeat Pharaoh. Yahweh fights for Israel only when the rod is raised. Moses' physical fatigue in v 12 prepares for 18:18; the same word describes his inability to function without sharing his authority. Joshua and Hur are introduced. Hur is mentioned elsewhere only in 24:14, unless he is also the grandfather of the Judahite artisan mentioned in Exod 31:1-2; 35:30; and 38:22 and in the genealogies in 1 Chr 2:19,20,50 and 4:1,4. Joshua, on the other hand, becomes Moses' most trusted servant

and, later on, his successor. 14-16. The Amalekites are cursed because they attempted to keep the people from their God-given heritage. Th curse is written in a document and given as a command to Joshua as military commander. Moses builds an altar to celebrate the victory and gives it an appropriate name.

(e) Jethro's Blessing and Advice (18:1–27 30 [E]). In vv 1-12 Jethro meets the people who had escaped from Pharaoh at the mountain, just as he had earlier met Moses the escapee near the mountain in 2:15-22. He recognizes Yahweh as the all-powerful deity in vv 10-11, another instance of a non-Israelite confessing Yahweh as the sole God because of the prosperity of his people. This story does not accord with Moses' farewell to Jethro in 4:18-26, in which Moses took his wife and sons with him to Egypt (4:20a is J, whereas chap. 18 is E). Further evidence of diversity of the traditions about Moses and the Midianites is the different names for Moses' father-in-law: Jethro here and in chap. 4, but Reuel in 2:18 and Hobab in Judg 4:11. Num 10:29 makes Hobab the son of Reuel. The Midianites were an early ally of Israel (so here) but later an enemy, as in Num 25; 31; and Judg 6-8. 2-4. The technical term for divorce (Deut 24:1,3) is not used here; Moses had sent her home from Egypt. Her father now brings her back to Moses. The sons' names recall Moses'

early relationship to his God. 10-12. To bless God is to recite what he has done so that the hearers may praise him and enhance his glory. Yahweh's sole divinity is proved by his defeating the great military and political power of the region, Egypt. The meal shows Jethro's bond with Israel. 13-27. Jethro is the one who first suggests that Moses share his authority with others. The same story is told in Deut 1:9-18, where the sharing takes place after Sinai and at divine command. 9-27. Moses will now bring "before God" the cases that have no precedent and teach the people the laws and teachings of God. He will continue to be their teacher, making known to them the way in which they should walk. In other words, routine cases that can be decided on precedent no longer come to Moses. In the Bible, to judge means to be partial, i.e., to rescue the innocent and oppressed party and punish the wicked. This conception of justice contrasts with the modern Western conception of justice as blind or impartial and the separation of judicial, executive, and legislative powers.

(II) Israel at Sinai (19:1-40:38). (A) Solemn Concluding of the Covenant (19:1-24:18). In the Priestly redactor's 12-stage procession that structures Exod to Num, the seventh station is Yahweh's mountain and the twelfth is the threshold of Yahweh's land. Israel remains encamped at Sinai from Exod 19:1 to Num 10:10. Sinai is therefore central not only by the sheer bulk of law and narrative connected with it but also by its position in the journey. Chaps. 19-24 describe the theophany (19), the Ten Commandments (20:1-17), and the Covenant Code (20:22-23:18); chaps. 25-31, the dwelling and its sacred personnel mediating God's presence; and chaps. 32-34, the apostasy and covenant renewal. At Sinai, Yahweh saw the condition of the people and resolved to act (3:7-8). Now the people have seen Yahweh and his works (19:4) and they must act. Will they agree to be God's people by obeying his will and building him a dwelling?

(a) ISRAEL ENCOUNTERS YAHWEH AT THE 32 MOUNTAIN (19:1-25 [P: 1,2a] [J: 2b,11b-13,18,20-25] [E: 3a,9-11a,14-19] [special source: 3b-8]). Moses makes three round trips from camp to mountain to arrange the covenant: in vv 3-8a he relays the terms to the people, who assent to it; in vv 8b-14 according to divine instruction he purifies the people; in vv 20-25 he is made sole mediator (with Aaron as assistant) with the priests and people kept at a distance. 1-2. The first month is Nisan, the time of Passover and Unleavened Bread. The second month is the entry into the wilderness of Sin, where the manna was given (16:1); it was the time of cereal harvest. Here the third month is the feast of Weeks, Pentecost. As early as the 2nd cent. BC some Jewish groups are recorded as connecting the giving of the law with the feast of Weeks. There is no hard evidence that mainstream Judaism made the connection between law and Pentecost until the 3rd cent. AD, but the connection may be early. The location of Mount Sinai cannot be fixed with any certainty. An imposing peak in the Sinai peninsula, Jebel Musa, has been identified with Sinai since Byzantine times (→ Biblical Geography, 73:29). Ancient biblical poetry, however, suggests that the mountain dwelling of God was directly south of Canaan and speaks of his advance with an army from the south, "Yahweh came from Sinai, and dawned from Seir upon us" (Deut 33:2; cf. Judg 5:4; Ps 68:8-9). 3-8a. Verse 3a prefaces the liturgical poem of vv 3b-8; in v 3a Moses goes up to 'ĕlōhîm, whereas in v 3b Yahweh calls down to Moses from the mountain. 4. The people have seen what "I did to Egypt and how I . . . brought you to myself." They must act by deciding whether to be God's people by obeying his voice and keeping his

commandment (v 5). God's bearing of the people to his land is developed in Deut 32:10-14, which also speaks of rescuing and selecting: "like an eagle he stirs up his nest, over his young he flutters. He spreads his wings, he takes him (the young), he bears him on his wings." In 3:12 God foretold that Israel would serve, i.e., worship, at this mountain. Sinai is territory sacred to Yahweh. To become Yahweh's people they must freely agree to the divine choice. The agreement is couched in traditional biblical language - obedience and keeping of covenant. "Covenant" is a biblical term for a sworn agreement between persons, ordinarily oral, to do something. It was done "before the gods," who were thought to sanction it. Treaties between nations and peoples (often personalized as covenants between the kings) were also covenants but of a special written type, called covenant formularies by some scholars. By the middle of the second millennium in the west Semitic world (and persisting until late in the first millennium), the formularies had developed into a genre, which consisted of a history of the relationship of suzerain and vassal kings, stipulations, curses and blessings consequent upon their observance, and a list of divine witnesses. The order was fluid and (apart from the blessings and curses) some items could be omitted. Was the Sinai covenant in Exod such a covenant formulary? Many scholars, such as G. E. Mendenhall and K. Baltzer, affirm that it was but solid evidence is lacking; there are no blessings and curses in the Exod covenant, nor a detailed historical prologue. The first instance of conscious Israelite adaptation of the covenant formulary seems to be Deut 5-28; see D. J. McCarthy, Treaty and Covenant (AnBib 21A; Rome, 1978); G. E. Mendenhall, "Covenant," IDB 1. 714-23; K. Baltzer, The Covenant Formulary (Phl, 1971). 5-6. If Israel agrees to hear Yahweh's voice (and not that of another god), they will be his segullâ, "possession," also used in the same sense in Deut 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Ps 135:4. Among other meanings, biblical seguilâ in the abovecited passages and the cognate Akkadian word sikiltu denote the treasures of the wealthy and of kings. In an Akkadian seal the king is the sikiltum of the goddess, and in a Ugaritic transl. of a Hittite-Ugaritic treaty, the Hittite king tells the Ugaritic king, "Now [you belong?] to the Sun, your Lord; you are [his serva]nt, his property [s]glth" (M. Held, JCS 15 [1961] 11; and H. B. Huffmon and S. B. Parker, BASOR 184 [1966] 36-37). Verses 5-6 are best translated, against most Eng versions, "You will be my special possession out of all the peoples. Though all the earth is mine, you will be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." "Special possession" in two other similar uses is followed by the phrase "from all the peoples"; "Indeed all the earth is mine," therefore, goes with the following phrases. The three phrases of vv 5b-6a go closely with the three of v 4. "Kingdom of in v 5 is unclear; semantically parallel to "holy nation," it probably means sacred among the nations, as priests are among the people. Yahweh has defeated the great power Egypt and its gods and has brought them to the safety of his precincts. If Israel accepts Yahweh as their God, they will belong to the only God (essentially the meaning of all the phrases of vv 5b-6a). 8b-19. Yahweh initially establishes in v 9 Moses' credibility, always a concern (4:1,5,8,9; 14:31). The people's hearing the divine cloud that guided (13:21-22) and rescued them (14:19,20,24) speaking to Moses ought to convince them. Verse 9a reprises v 8b, a Hebrew way of getting back to the main thread after the word to Moses in v 9a. Consecration of the people means their separation from the profane world; clothing is to be washed of earthly grime, and sexual relations are prohibited. The entire mountain becomes sacred by the coming of Yahweh; anyone who strays into it becomes charged with holiness. Such a dangerous person must be removed lest his contagion infect others; he is to be killed without anyone touching him, hence by stoning or by arrows. The actual theophany in vv 16-19 takes place in a storm, like other theophanies in the Bible (Exod 15:8,10; Judg 5:4-5; Pss 18:6-19; 29; 77:16-20; etc.) and in Ugaritic literature. Scholarly arguments to the contrary notwithstanding, the theophany is not a volcano; one cannot approach an active volcano. Moreover, there were no active volcanos in the area, and there is no attestation of volcanic theophanies in comparable literature. The depiction mingles later liturgical reenactment in the description of the original event (trumpet = thunder; firepot = smoke), so that later generations might celebrate the foundational event. Mount Zion in Jerusalem later became the heir of the Sinai traditions; the law was preached from there, e.g., Ps 50 and Isa 2:1-5. 20-25. The section emphasizes how great is the distance between Yahweh and the people and underscores the mediation of Moses. Many scholars believe that 20:18-21 originally stood after 19:19. In any case 19:20-25 establishes the mediating role of Moses.

(b) The Ten Commandments (20:1-21 [E]). The Decalogue is also found in Deut 5:6-21 with slight changes; Deut gives a different reason for the observance of the sabbath and in the last commandment places the neighbor's wife before the neighbor's house. The numeration of the commandments differs slightly in the tradition; Anglican, Greek, and Reformed traditions reckon the prohibitions against false worship as two, whereas the Lutheran and Roman Catholic traditions count them as one and divide the last commandment into two. 2-6. A strong assertion that Yahweh is the only deity for Israel. Since he defeated their former lord and master, he and no other deity is their God. The best transl. is, "I, Yahweh, am your God." Verses 3-5a forbid images, which in the ancient Near East were the ordinary means of encounter between god and worshiper. Verse 3 refers to the statues of deities in the sanctuary; excavations have revealed shrines with several images of gods in them. The aniconic tradition is ancient in Israel; no certain image of Yahweh has so far been found at any Israelite site, though a crude depiction of a god and his consort found at Kuntillat Ajrud may be Yahweh and Asherah (M. Coogan, "Canaanite Origins and Lineage: Reflections on the Religion of Ancient Israel," Ancient Israelite Religion [Fest. F. M. Cross; ed. P. D. Miller et al.; Phl, 1987] 115-24). Verse 5b resumes and expands v 2a. "Impassioned" is a better transl. than "jealous." Yahweh is passionately committed to Israel; he will see to it that all sins are punished even if the punishment is borne by the children of the parents who have committed the sin; the people consist of more than one generation. "Sin" in the Bible often denotes at once the act and the consequences of the act. The consequences, or the plight one gets into by one's sins, are sometimes described as directly sent by God and sometimes as the natural result of human actions. In this text, divine initiative is strongly stated. Those "rejecting me" (better than traditional "hating me"), after they had accepted Yahweh in the ceremony just concluded, commit a sin that will not go unpunished. Verse 6 is the positive side: those who love, who keep his commandments, will experience the divine kindness (hesed), Yahweh's covenantal love; it is a passionate commitment to his people founded in the noblesse oblige of the Great Suzerain. 7. The prohibition seems to be against the false use of an oath in legal proceedings rather than a general lack of reverence for the name. 8-11. The sabbath is a peculiarly Israelite institution; at least no satisfactory parallel in other

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cultures has so far been discovered. To sanctify it means to set it apart, to avoid doing the work of the weekday on it. Verses 8-10 parallel v 11; the rhythm of time was created along with all else in the first week (Gen 1:1-2:3). 12. In a traditional and largely oral society, elders were to be respected as repositories of tradition. Parents also depended on children to care for them in old age. 13. Only illegal killing is prohibited; Israel had the death penalty. 15. Kidnapping is prohibited; ordinary theft is forbidden by the last commandment. 17. As comparable inscriptions make clear, hāmad means conspiracy, taking steps to steal (not merely "covet"). 18-21. The section, underscoring the popular acceptance of Moses' mediation, matches 19:20-25, where Yahweh appoints Moses to that role. The people were afraid of close contact with God, which would have swept them out of the everyday world into the divine world, i.e., would have killed them.

(c) The Covenant Code (20:22-23:33 [E]). 34 The Covenant Code (so called from 24:7) is given after the single event of theophany and commandment in 20:1-17. The awestruck people beg Moses to mediate any further commandments (20:19). The collection consists of apodictic statements (20:22-26; 22:18-23:19) and case law (21:2-22:17). The latter are introduced by 22:1, "These are the judgments," which are decisions to be rendered in the specific cases that follow. Exod 24:3, which distinguishes "words" and "judgments," may express this distinction, or it may express the distinction generally between the Ten Commandments and the Covenant Code. The judgments are rationally arranged, but the apodictic sayings are wide-ranging and irregular (M. Greenberg, "Some Postulates of Biblical Law," Jewish Expression [ed. J. Goldin; New Haven, 1976] 18-37)

Ancient Near Eastern codes of law were not comprehensive like the Napoleonic Code or the Roman Catholic Code of Canon Law, nor appparently did they always guide local judges in applying the law-at least in Mesopotamia, where there are discrepancies between the codes and recorded daily practice. Law codes were expressions of the divine will; the famous Code of Hammurabi (reigned 1725-1686) pictures the sun-god Shamash presenting the king with the laws that are inscribed on the lower half of the stele. At the king's accession, which was believed to be a renewal of the creation order, he proclaimed just decrees; the royal law codes enshrined that proclamation. The Covenant Code is proclaimed at Israel's creation by God's regent, Moses. Like other codes, it does not aim for completeness; it offers a sample of the divine intention for Israel and

establishes the mediating office of Moses. (i) Injunctions regarding the shrine (20:22–26 [E]). Divine-human encounter is God's to regulate, as the theophany with its explicit rules (19:10-15; 20-24) vividly demonstrates. No statues of deities are permitted in Yahweh's sanctuary because he spoke from heaven, i.e., invisibly, with no form to be reproduced by a statue (cf. Deut 4:12). Altars are to be built according to divine specifications, of earth or of unhewn stone. In the whole offering an animal is completely consumed on the altar (except the skin) in expiation for sin. The purpose of the "offering of well-being" (or "peace offering," šělamîm, in Hebr always pl.) remains unclear. Deut 12:13-14, most probably of the late 8th cent., centralizes sacrifice in one place only, but in this period there could be many altars; indeed Josh-1 Kgs speaks of sacrifices being offered in different parts of the land without any indication of violation of law. Even with many altars, God must designate the site, must make it a place where his name, his presence, is there to bless the life of the worshiper.

The last provision, in v 26, is echoed in 28:42; whatever is unbefitting to the sacred sphere is to be avoided.

(ii) Judgments regarding Hebrew slaves (21:1-11). For other legislation on slaves, see Deut 15:12-18 and Lev 25:39-55. An Israelite could be born a slave or fall into slavery through sale by the parents as debt payment (2 Kgs 4:1; Amos 2:6) or through failure to make restitution in theft (22:1). 1. The mispātîm are the decisions made by judges; they can be translated "rules" or "judgments." 2-6. A male slave is to serve six years and in the seventh year go free in the condition in which he entered. If the slave married a slave woman, the woman remains her master's, and the children remain with her because the child's relation to the mother was considered more basic than its relation to the father. The slave had the option of remaining with his family and his master, in which case his decision was ratified in the local shrine, and his ear, the organ of obedience, was pierced at the door of his master's house. 7-11. The statutes concern the female slave as concubine. The relationship is not of a nature to be broken off at the end of six years as was the case of the male. If she does not please the master, a member of her family may buy her back ("redeem" her); the master may not sell her outside her family (the meaning of "foreign" here). If the woman is destined for the master's son, she shall be treated like the other daughters in the household; her food, clothing, and oil are to be supplied or else she can go free. The third element, traditionally "conjugal rights," is better translated "oil," as suggested by comparative evidence (S. Paul, JNES 28 [1969] 48-53).

(iii) Judgments concerning capital crimes (21:12–17 The Bible distinguishes manslaughter and willful [E]). murder. In willful murder, the blood avenger (gō'ēl), the nearest kinsman, retaliates by taking the life of the murderer. The "state" cedes to the avenger the settling of the case. Cities of refuge were provided in cases of manslaughter, where the guilty party was safe from the

avenger. See Num 35 and Deut 19:1-13. (iv) Judgments concerning harm or death caused by humans, animals, or through neglect (21:18-36 [E]). 18-19. If the man died, his attacker would be guilty of manslaughter and would have had to flee to a city of refuge (vv 12-13). It is not manslaughter if the sick man is able to walk even if only with the aid of a cane; there is a money penalty only. 20-21. The law regards slaves differently from their masters. As long as the slave does not die on the day of his beating, the master goes unpunished, or, rather, the loss of the slave is considered punishment enough. 22-25. The fetus has a money value, to be determined by some kind of reckoning (the last phrase cannot be exactly translated). Harm to the mother is not measured by money but by the famous lex talionis (Lat, "law of retaliation," a phrase derived from the Twelve Tables of ca. 450 BC). Other instances are found in the Code of Hammurabi (nos. 195-205 [ANET 175]); Lev 24:19-20; Deut 19:21. The law seems severe but it mitigates blood vengeance; vengeance is satisfied with something less than loss of life. 26-27. As in vv 20-21, slaves are regarded differently from free Israelites; for them there is no lex talionis. Just as in the Code of Hammurabi (nos. 198, 210), the upper-class person pays money damages for injuring a commoner (S. Greengus, IDBSup 545-46). The master's person is not touched, but at least the slave goes free. 28-32. The owner is not held liable for his goring ox unless he knew the animal was dangerous and took no corrective steps. If the family of the person killed by the ox agreed, the culpable owner could pay a fine (Hebr koper, the price of a life; cf. 30:12; Ps 49:7), wergild, money offered for the life of a murdered man to appease the kinsmen. Num

35:31–32 forbids the practice. The same rule applies to "minors" but not to slaves; since they are chattel, their owner is to be recompensed at the standard price of a slave. 33–34. Two instances of harm to animals. One case concerns a reopened or a freshly dug pit.

(v) Judgments concerning burglary and theft (22:1-4 [E]). Some translations rearrange the verses 22:1,4,2, 3, but the verses should be read in their normal order. "The thief" in v 2 refers back to "When a man breaks in . . ." in v 1, just as "the ox" in v 28b refers back to "When an ox ..." in v 28a, and "the one who kindled" in v 5 refers back to "When a man kindles . . ." in v 4 (Notes on the New Translation of the Torah [Phl, 1969] 180). Four- or fivefold restitution of stolen goods is common in law codes; David in 2 Sam 12:6 speaks of a fourfold restoration of a lamb. Verses 2-3 allow a nocturnal thief tunneling under the wall to be beaten to death with no bloodguilt upon the householder (cf. 1 Sam 25:26,33). In daylight the apprehended thief is held to restitution according to the norm in v 4: twofold restitution since the stolen goods are still on his person. If the thief cannot make restitution, he is to be sold into slavery, the money going to satisfy the householder.

(vi) Judgments concerning burning another's fields (25:5-6 [E]). The LXX, followed by some modern translations, translates Hebr b'r as "to graze," but the more common and preferable meaning here is "to burn"; vv 5-6, therefore, go together and concern culpability in burning stubble, a practice of preparing fields that is still

current in the East.

(vii) Judgments concerning culpability for deposited property (22:7-15 [E]). 7-8. Restitution is twofold for stolen deposits, as in v 4. "Come near to God" means to take a solemn oath in the local sanctuary as v 11 suggests. 9. As the Code of Hammurabi makes clear, the person to whom the deposit was entrusted might deny that the deposit was ever made and claim that the goods were all his. If there were no records or witnesses, the case has to be decided by oath and presumably by an ordeal or judgment by which one of the two claimants was declared guilty by God. 10-11. Culpability for the death, injury, or loss to raiders of deposited animals is settled by oath. But simple theft (v 12) is presumed here to be preventable; the trustee is liable. Attack on cattle by wild animals, as long as the carcass is there to prove it, is reckoned to be so common as to preclude restitution. 14-15. The borrower is responsible for borrowed animals unless the owner was there. The last phrase in v 15 is not clear; probably the owner is still entitled to the hiring fee even if the animal dies.

(viii) Judgments concerning the seduction of a young woman (22:16-17 [E]). The case is that of a man who persuades a young woman to sleep with him. Her marriage has not yet been arranged between her father and her future bridegroom (or his family). Unlike the case in Deut 22:28-29, he uses no force but persuades her. By the fact of the man's willingness to have her, she legally is now in the position of a woman whose marriage has been arranged by the bridegroom. Her father, however, can refuse his consent, in which case the man still owes the bride-price since she is no longer a virgin

and hence no longer readily marriageable.

43 (ix) Commands about various social and cultic matters (22:18-23:19 [E]). This is a representative group of noncasuistic laws—prohibitions, directions, and commands—some couched in the 2d pers., some without stating a penalty. Such laws are not well attested in other ancient Near Eastern law codes (though cf. Eshnunna Laws 10-11,15-16,51-52 [ANET 162-63]; Hammurabi Code, nos. 36,38-40 [ANET 167-68]; and

the Assyrian Laws A 40,57-59 [ANET 183-85]); they occur rather in ritual and magic texts outside the Bible and also in treaties. The preponderance of such laws in the biblical codes seems attributable to the special role of Yahweh as sole God and hence authoritative lawgiver. 18. Belief in one God means that the aid of spirits is not be be invoked. Concern with the problem elsewhere (Deut 18:10; Jer 27:9; and other passages) shows that the problem was real in Israel. 19. A prohibition found also in Lev 18:23; 20:15-16; Deut 27:21. 20. Violators of the first commandment are to be proscribed (not "utterly destroyed"), i.e., set apart from the community. 21-24. Resident aliens (gērîm), people living more or less permanently in a community other than their own, were often classed with widows and the fatherless as needing protection; cf. Deut 24:19-22; Jer 7:6; Ezek 22:7. As outsiders, often without clan protection, they were vulnerable and often poor (Lev 19:10 and Deut 24:14). Special access to Yahweh is their protection. 25-27. Loans were not made for commercial purposes but to alleviate distress; to take interest on them would be to profit from another's misfortune. Laws regulated intrusive creditors (Deut 24:6,10-13). The poor were specifically protected; their outer garment, which served as their blanket at night, had to be returned to them by evening. As in vv 21-24, the compassionate God watches over the weak. Amos (2:8) accuses the wealthy of sleeping upon garments taken in pledge. 28. The intimate link between God and the leader who acts and speaks on his behalf is affirmed elsewhere in the Pentateuch: 14:10-12,31; 16:7-8; 17:2; Num 12:8. 29-31. Holiness (v 31) means belonging to the deity, being removed from profane life. God's total possession of the people is signified by their offering to him the firstfruits, which represent the totality. Objects are "removed" by placing them in a shrine or giving them to sacred persons; living things are "removed" by killing them. Verse 29b is literally "your fullness and your trickling." The LXX and modern translations correctly expand the ancient expression. The human firstborn are "redeeemed" by an animal substitute (13:13; 34:20; etc.). Verse 31b illustrates the meaning of holiness by a single example: Israel is to eat only meat correctly slaughtered so as to dispose of the blood (Lev 17:14-16). 23:1-3. Like Lev 19:15-16, the verses prescribe fairness for witnesses at trials. The witness is not to enter a conspiracy to give false testimony. 4-5. This interrupts the natural connection of vv 1-3 to vv 6-9. Deut 22:1-4 states the law with characteristic additions: it substitutes "brother," i.e., kinsman, for "enemy," and it includes all lost items, not just animals. Lev 19:17-18 forbids hatred of "brother//neighbor" and counsels loving one's neighbor as oneself. Justice, i.e., the return of goods and offering necessary assistance, is due even to personal enemies, just as it is to other classes – resident aliens, widows, and the fatherless. The last phrase is obscure in Hebr but can be understood according to Deut 22:4. 6-9. As vv 1-3 were addressed to witnesses, these verses are addressed to judges. In the ancient Near East, the gods were believed to be behind the legal system. For a judge to sentence the innocent and to acquit the guilty does not change the reality; Yahweh will not follow the human judgment but will punish the judge. Bribes, the curse of the Eastern lawcourt, are to have no place in Israel. The protection of the resident alien, stated already in 22:21, is repeated in the new context of the just lawcourt. 10-11. The verses are obviously related to vv 12-13 by the repetition of "six . . . but (on) the seventh. . . . " It is not certain whether the practice was actually carried out in biblical times; evidence for its practice is late, in the 5th cent. (Neh 10:31; 1 Macc 6:49,53). Lev 25:2-7,

183-85]); they utside the Bible of such laws in he special role of itative lawgiver. l of spirits is not blem elsewhere s) shows that the pition found also Violators of the ed (not "utterly amunity. 21-24. g more or less their own, were erless as needing ; Ezek 22:7. As tion, they were ind Deut 24:14). otection. 25-27. purposes but to em would be to regulated intru-The poor were nt, which served rned to them by passionate God uses the wealthy pledge. 28. The ler who acts and ere in the Pentaım 12:8. 29-31. the deity, being possession of the im the firstfruits, re "removed" by them to sacred by killing them. I your trickling." rectly expand the 1 are "redeeemed" etc.). Verse 31b a single example: ightered so as to **23:1–3.** Like Lev ; for witnesses at inspiracy to give e natural connec--4 states the law ritutes "brother," des all lost items, rbids hatred of ig one's neighbor oods and offering personal enemies, ens, widows, and e in Hebr but can . 6-9. As vv 1-3 ses are addressed , the gods were n. For a judge to e guilty does not ollow the human ribes, the curse of lace in Israel. The already in 22:21, ne just lawcourt. d to vv 12-13 by seventh. . . . " It is tually carried out tice is late, in the 53). Lev 25:2-7,

20-22 suggest that there was a common reckoning of the seventh year for all fields. The purpose stated is not agricultural but humanitarian—that the poor may eat. 12-13. In style these verses resemble the preceding. The reasons given for observance, that the draft animals and the workers might rest, is different from that given under the third commandment. Verse 13 seems peculiarly placed. The prohibition of even the mention of other gods serves to introduce the following verses. 14-17. The cultic calendar, here given with several miscellaneous rules, appears also in 34:18-26; Lev 23:1-44; and Deut 16:1-17 with significant variations. The feasts are pilgrimage feasts to the shrine (Hebr hag, like the Islamic hajj; R. de Vaux, AI 484-506). The first feast is Unleavened Bread (Hebr massôt), already mentioned in 12:14-20,34; 13:3-10. Here and in 34:18 the text does not connect the rites of unleavened bread and Passover lamb, unlike the P legislation in chap. 12. "Emptyhanded" in v 15 refers to offering the sheaves in the shrine. The second feast is at the harvest of wheat, seven weeks after the first cereals were cut. Num 28:26 calls it Firstfruits and feast of Weeks. It is called Pentecost, "fiftieth day," in 2 Macc 12:31-32 and Tob 2:1. The third feast, Ingathering in the old Exod calendars, came later to be called the feast of Tents, commemorating the tents of the wilderness period, or simply the Feast in Ezek 45:25; 1 Kgs 8:2,65. It was celebrated in autumn at the end of the year; in the early period, Israel celebrated the new year in the fall. 18-19. Supplementing the rules for the three pilgrimage feasts are four ritual regulations. The fat, the desirable part of the animal, is to be burned entirely and at once, except that around the kidneys and intestines (Lev 3:3-4). The prohibition against boiling a kid in its mother's milk is repeated verbatim in 34:26 and Deut 14:21. Why the practice is forbidden is not known; a damaged Ugaritic text may mention a similar rite (see Bible Review 1/3 [1985] 48-58).

(x) The blessings of keeping the covenant (23:20-44 33 [E]). Ancient law codes sometimes concluded with curses and blessings, e.g., Lipit Ishtar Code (ANET 161), Code of Hammurabi (ANET 178-80), Holiness Code (Lev 26:3-45), Deut 27-28. The biblical examples show flexibility, adapting the genre to historical circumstances. Like the blessing promised to Jacob leaving Canaan, "See I am with you and will guard you wherever you walk" (Gen 28:15; cf. vv 20-22), Yahweh through the angel will be with the people and bring them to their land. The condition for the blessings is obedience during the journey to the angel, who is Yahweh himself "in a temporary descent to visibility for a special purpose" (A. McNeile, cited in Driver, Exodus 248), and to the first commandment after the conquest (vv 23-25). The blessings are the divine presence that gives protection on the way (vv 20-22), food and drink and good health, living out the normal life-span, assistance in the war of conquest (vv 27-30), and secure possession of a vast land (v 31). 20. God's presence with the people, leading them to the land, is a constant theme (e.g., 32:34; 33:2-3,12,14-16; 34:9). There is a keen awareness of how an all-holy God could dwell with a sinful people. The divine presence is pictured variously: the angel, the pillar of cloud (13:21; 40:36-38), and the Ark (Num 10:33). 21. The name manifests the person; disobedience to the angel bearing the divine name is disobedience to God. Verses 23-25a are possibly an addition, since they interrupt the list of blessings; they resemble 34:11-14. Lists of the prior inhabitants of the land, usually in lists of three, six, or seven, are frequent in the Bible; it is not easy to identify the ethnic groups named within Palestine. The name Amorites is originally

a Babylonian term, "westerners," to designate people west of Babylon. It is favored by the E source, whereas I prefers the term Canaanite. Perizzites may have meant originally "hill dwellers" and may have come to be reckoned as a gentilic. Hittite may refer to scattered Hittite families in the area; the Hittite empire in Asia Minor never reached Palestine. Hivites are probably Hurrians, an ancient group active in northern Mesopotamia in the second millennium. Jebusites are the native inhabitants of Jerusalem. 27-30. In holy war, panic sent by the gods is an important weapon. "Hornets" in v 28 is a traditional translation since the LXX, but the real meaning is unknown. 31. One of several descriptions of the land; others are Gen 15:18; Deut 11:24; Num 34; 1 Kgs 4:21. The southern boundaries are the northeast border of Egypt and the desert south of Palestine, the southeast coast, and northern Syria.

(d) THE RATIFICATION OF THE COVENANT (24:1-18 [J: 1-2,9-11] [E: 3-8,12-15a,18b], but according to others "J" and "E" in this chapter are special sources; [P: 15b-18a]). The chap. describes the ratification in two different ways: the representatives of the people banquet with God (1-2,9-11), and the people agree to the covenant in a blood rite (3-8,12-15a). The combination of two sources may confuse the reader. Verses 3-8 follow naturally 20:22-23:33; Moses recounts to the people the Ten Commandments and the Covenant Code ("all the words of Yahweh and the judgments") that he has just heard, and the people agree to it. In vv 1-2+9-11, however, God commands Moses to come up to the mountain, where he already is (20:21). Similarly, v 12 fits uneasily after v 11. In the redactor's perspective, 24:1 evidently began a fresh scene, one that does not directly continue 20:21. In this perspective, Moses and the leaders are told to ascend the mountain, but before they do in v 9, they carry out the ritual in vv 3-8. 1-2. Nadab and Abihu are the sons of Aaron (6:23). A threefold gradation is made: Moses, who alone comes near God; the elders, who ascend but do not come near; and the people, who remain in the camp. 3-8. Moses, as tradition dictates (cf. 19:7,9,25; 34:32; etc.), immediately reports the words (= the Ten Commandments) and the judgments (= the Covenant Code) to the people, who assent to it. A solemn ritual is prepared: the words are written down, the altar and pillars are set up, the sacrifices are offered; the "service of the word" is in v 8. Part of the blood is sprinkled on the altar, which represents God, and part is preserved for the rest of the rite. The book of the covenant is the word that defines the rite. As the blood is sprinkled on the people, they share the blood with the altar, the symbol of God. Word and rite are inseparably united. Verses 9-11 continue the source in vv 1-2. According to the present arrangement of the chapter, Moses and the representatives of the people ascend the mountain to celebrate the union. The text is reticent about God's appearance; the men apparently see him from below, as through transparent sky-blue tiles. Humans may not look upon the deity lest they be swept out of the profane world in which they live, i.e., die. On this momentous occasion, however, the invited leaders are protected by the rules of hospitality; they share a meal with their divine host. "To see a great chief and eat in his place is to join his family in the root sense of that Latin word; the whole group related by blood or not which stood under the authority and protection of the father. One is united to him as a client to his patron who protects him and whom he serves" (McCarthy, Treaty and Covenant 266). Verses 13-14 continue the source in vv 3-8. The elders are left in charge of the camp, with Aaron and Hur taking Moses' place in the administration of justice. Verse 12b is difficult. According to v 4, Moses

has already written down "all the words of Yahweh." The contents must be limited enough for Moses to carry them in two tablets (32:19); it could not have contained all of 20:22-23:33 Probably the tablets contained the divinely made copy of the Ten Commandments, whereas the "instructions and commandments" refer to additional words that Moses will be told on the mountain. Another possible solution is that "instructions and commandments" belongs at the end of the sentence after the mention of writing. Hur, mentioned as the helper of Moses in 17:10,12, but surprisingly not in v 1, was a descendant of Judah and the grandfather of Bezalel, the builder of the Tabernacle (31:2; 1 Chr 2:19). 15-18. In P's terminology, God's presence is an enveloping cloud (cf., e.g., 40:34), a "glory" like a consuming fire, or, in this context, the storm cloud. Moses will finish his

divine encounter in 31:18.

(B) Divine Command to Build and Maintain the Dwelling (chaps. 25-31). Chaps. 25-31 and 35-40, ascribed entirely to P either as redactor or archival source, describe the wilderness dwelling, its furniture and personnel. The designation "tabernacle" is derived from the Vg tabernaculum, "tent." This commentary uses "dwelling" to preserve the occasional Hebr distinction between "tent" and "dwelling" and to show the relation of the noun to the technical use of the vb. "to dwell." In chaps. 25-31, Yahweh commands Moses to build, from the freewill offerings of the people (25:1-9) first the furnishings (the ark, table, and lampstand 25:10-40), then the large tent (chap. 26) with its altar and its court (chap. 27), and then to see to the personnel of the shrine described through the vesting (chap. 28) and ordination of priests (chap. 29) and their chief procedures (chap. 30). This is concluded by the selection of the craftsmen Bezalel and Oholiab and their assistants and an affirmation of sabbath rest (chap. 31). Moses then takes the two tablets of the law down to the people (31:18). In chaps. 35–40 the divine commands are carried out more or less to the letter, though the order of building is somewhat different from the order of commands (V. Hurowitz, JAOS 105 [1985] 21-30)

This section is highly important, even though the mass of detail may not interest modern readers. For a great people to exist in the ancient Near East, it had to have certain essentials: a land, specific traditions (legal and narrative), a king or great leader, a god(s), and a house for the god(s). Yahweh has shown himself to be the people's God by defeating Pharaoh, and they are encamped at his mountain and about to move on to Canaan; they also have just been given a law and have a divinely appointed leader, Moses. A house for their God remains to be built, a house that ensures God's presence in their midst. The house must be designed by God, not humans; hence, the importance of the divine

commands prior to construction.

Many scholars, following 19th-cent. scholarship, regard the dwelling as a complete retrojection into the wilderness period of the later Temple of Solomon; the P writer could not imagine a time when Israel was without the divine presence mediated by the Temple. Such a view is unlikely. The dimensions of the Solomonic Temple are not replicated exactly in the tabernacle. It is true that there is some retrojection but not of the Temple; the elaborate Davidic tent attested in 2 Sam 6:17 and 7:2 has influenced the description of an originally portable tent shrine, like the Arab qubba, attested among 2nd-cent. AD Nabateans. The dwelling seems too complex and heavy for easy transport, and the altar in 27:1-8 is a transposition of a later altar into desert materials. Even though the original dwelling cannot be precisely delineated, there is no uncertainty regarding the Canaanite background of the dwelling. It is an Israelite adaptation of the tent of the high god El, attested in the Ugaritic texts of the 15th-13th cents. El, bearded and wise, lives in an elaborate tent ("seven rooms, eight enclosures"), where the gods meet in solemn assembly (m'd, the same root as Hebr [tent of] "meeting") and make decisions that affect humankind (F. M. Cross, "The Priestly Tabernacle in the Light of Recent Research," The Temple in Antiquity [Provo, 1984] 91-105; R. J. Clifford, CBQ 33 [1971] 221-27).

(a) THE PEOPLE ARE TO GIVE THE MATERIAL FOR THE DWELLING (25:1-9). Yahweh tells Moses to let all Israelites, regardless of class, make freewill contributions to the sanctuary. In comparable societies, the king, as regent of the god, built the temple. Verses 3b-9 list the raw material, roughly in order of worth. 35:5b-9 repeat vv 3b-8, and 35:10-29 (without exact parallel in chaps. 25-31) go on and tell how specialist workers were recruited and how all the people contributed. 4. Blue and purple yarns were dyed with extracts from shellfish, and crimson yarns from the female of the cochineal insect. 5. Traditional Eng "goatskins" are in reality dolphin skins (Hebr těhaším = Arab tuhas, "dolphin"); the dolphin was a common motif in Phoenician art. Verse 8 states the aim, that Yahweh may dwell (šākan) among the people. Hebr miškān, the noun from šākan, "dwelling," should be distinguished from Hebr 'ōhel, "tent." Already the LXX had translated both miškān and 'ōhel by "tent," thereby obscuring P's careful use of the archaic word "dwelling." The verb and the noun, "to dwell" and "dwelling," connote a gracious but not necessarily permanent abiding with the people, a usage carefully preserved in 1 Kgs 8. 9. The earthly structure is to replicate the heavenly tent and its furniture and personnel, enabling the Israelite to participate in heavenly ceremonies.

(b) THE ARK (25:10-22; cf. 37:1-9). The ark was a box, 45" x 27" x 27", with two rings on each side for carrying-poles. The box was to be a storage place for the two tablets of the law, and its top was to be a place of encounter between humans and God. A plate of pure gold was to be laid flush with the top with two cherubim whose wings touch. Cherubim were composite creatures, with physical characteristics of animals and humans, usually winged; they were often throne guardians. The golden plate covering the top of the box, to which was attached the cherubim throne, was the most sacred object in the dwelling; here God was enthroned invisibly, meeting and speaking to the people through Moses. The Hebr term kapporet, lit., "cover," was translated by Martin Luther as "mercy seat," with an eye on Lev 16 and the NT; this transl. is misleading. The primary meaning of the term is given by vv 21-22: a throne and meeting place of God and humans, through

the word mediated by Moses.

50 (c) The Table (25:23–30; cf. 37:10–16). The table, on which the bread was set out, was 35" x 18" x 26"; like the ark, it was portable with carrying-poles permanently attached. There seems to have been a side panel at the top and a separate frame three inches wide, both with "molding"; the lower frame held the legs in place. Upon it were set the bread and the wine (poured from the vessels) commonly set before images of the gods to honor them. In Israel gifts were continually before Yahweh to emphasize that the covenant was forever. Twelve huge loaves were arranged each sabbath in two rows on the table, consumed after their display by the priests.

51 (d) THE LAMPSTAND (25:31-40; cf. 37:17-24). The lampstand consisted of a sturdy shaft with three branches on each side. On each branch were three