



Christian Questions

Think about the Bible like you never have before

Dear Tracy,

You wanted to know if there was some source other than the Bible that confirmed the large-scale Exodus from Egypt of Moses and the Israelites and all the amazing things that happened to them in the Sinai Desert during their 40-year sojourn to Canaan.

For centuries, Jews and Christians have embraced the biblical account of the Exodus story as fact. However, especially in the last 20 years, some scholars have stated the event was not historical due to a lack of archeological evidence.

Good news! Recent excavations in 2017 may have uncovered historical evidence for the Exodus. We quote from an article entitled, "Historical Evidence for the Exodus May Have Been Found" by Kayla Koslosky (*ChristianHeadlines.com Editor* September 27, 2018).

Experts are currently analyzing ruins near the River Jordan as potential proof that the story of the Exodus, is more than a legend and indeed a historical fact. According to the Bible, Moses liberated the Israelites from Egypt leading them through Sinai and across the River Jordan to Canaan. Archaeologists Ralph K. Hawkins and David Ben-Shlomo have now found some evidence in the Jordan Valley site of Khirbet el-Mastarah, which they believe are remnants of ruins from a nomadic people who they believe to be the Hebrews coming from Egypt. On Tuesday Ben-Shlomo told U.K. Daily Express that based on his expertise the ruins offer great potential to be evidence for the Exodus. "We have not proved that these camps are from the period of the early Israelites, but it is possible," noted Ben-Shlomo. If they are, this might fit the biblical story of the Israelites coming from east of the Jordan River, then crossing the Jordan and entering into the hill country of Israel later. Ben-Shlomo and Hawkins published their findings in the July/August 2018 edition of Biblical Archaeology Review, where they discussed the periodization of the ruins. According to the journal, the ruins appear to date to the Iron Age, the same time as the Exodus."

We will quote from another article entitled, "Was the Bible Exodus a Real Event?" by Sheri Bell.

Alan Millard of the University of Liverpool, says: Lacking any trace of Joseph, Moses, or Israelites in Egypt, many have concluded they were never there. Yet no pharaoh would boast of the loss of his labor force on a monument, and administrative records on papyrus, leather, or wooden tablets which might have registered such events would perish rapidly in the Delta's damp soil. It is equally unlikely that a camping crowd would leave recognizable remains from a semi-nomadic life in the Sinai Wilderness and in Transjordan. The absence of evidence is not, therefore, evidence of absence!

Old Testament scholar and Egyptologist James Hoffmeier confirms that Goshen, in the Nile Delta, is quite moist due to rain and annual flooding. If the Israelites had been in the dry Southern region, where the Dead Sea scrolls have been uncovered, he is certain papyrus documents would have survived. "We have to be realistic," he adds, "about what we think archaeology can and can't do."

"Archaeological discoveries have verified that parts of the Biblical Exodus are historically accurate, but archaeology can't tell us everything, agrees the Biblical Archaeological Society. "Although archaeology can illuminate aspects of the past and bring parts of history to life, it has its limits."

Our key takeaway: Limited evidence does not mean the event didn't happen as the Bible tells it.

~ Taking the Bible as Truth ~

We find the Exodus mentioned *as a historical event* throughout the Old Testament, including the books of Psalms, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings and in the Prophets. We should note that the Bible is not a single source document. It has multiple sources, all of which maintain the authenticity of the Exodus tradition. Historians recognize that the likelihood of the authenticity of an event increases as independent sources that verify it are discovered.

To date, scholars cannot concretely prove that Moses existed, that Israel lived in Egypt, or that this group of Hebrews fled from Pharaoh. But neither can they disprove the historicity of the biblical narrative.

As Hoffmeier notes:

"With this overwhelming evidence within the Bible regarding the Egyptian sojourn, exodus, and wilderness episodes, evidence coming from a variety of types of literature and used in a host of different ways, it is methodologically inadvisable, at best, to treat the Bible as a single witness to history, requiring corroboration before the Egypt-Sinai reports can be taken as authentic."

Simply put, there is enough evidence contained in the Bible to make the story believable. It is likely such a man as Moses existed, a people such as Israel lived in Egypt, and these people left Egypt via the route detailed in the Bible.

“Many people today treat the Bible as being guilty until proven innocent,” adds Hoffmeier. “Which doesn’t seem fair, as who’s around to prove it that lived back then?”

You wanted to know if there was some source other than the Bible that confirmed the large-scale Exodus from Egypt of Moses and the Israelites. As of yet, there is no other source. The Bible, which is the word of God is, is the only known source. However, ongoing archeological excavations may soon confirm the authenticity of the Exodus story.

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for our weekly newsletter to receive CQ Rewind at ChristianQuestions.com. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions

ChristianQuestions.com

“cqbiblepodcast” on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest

ChristianQuestions.com/youtube for inspirational videos to help you focus

Live Podcast and Live Chatroom Every Monday 8pm Eastern