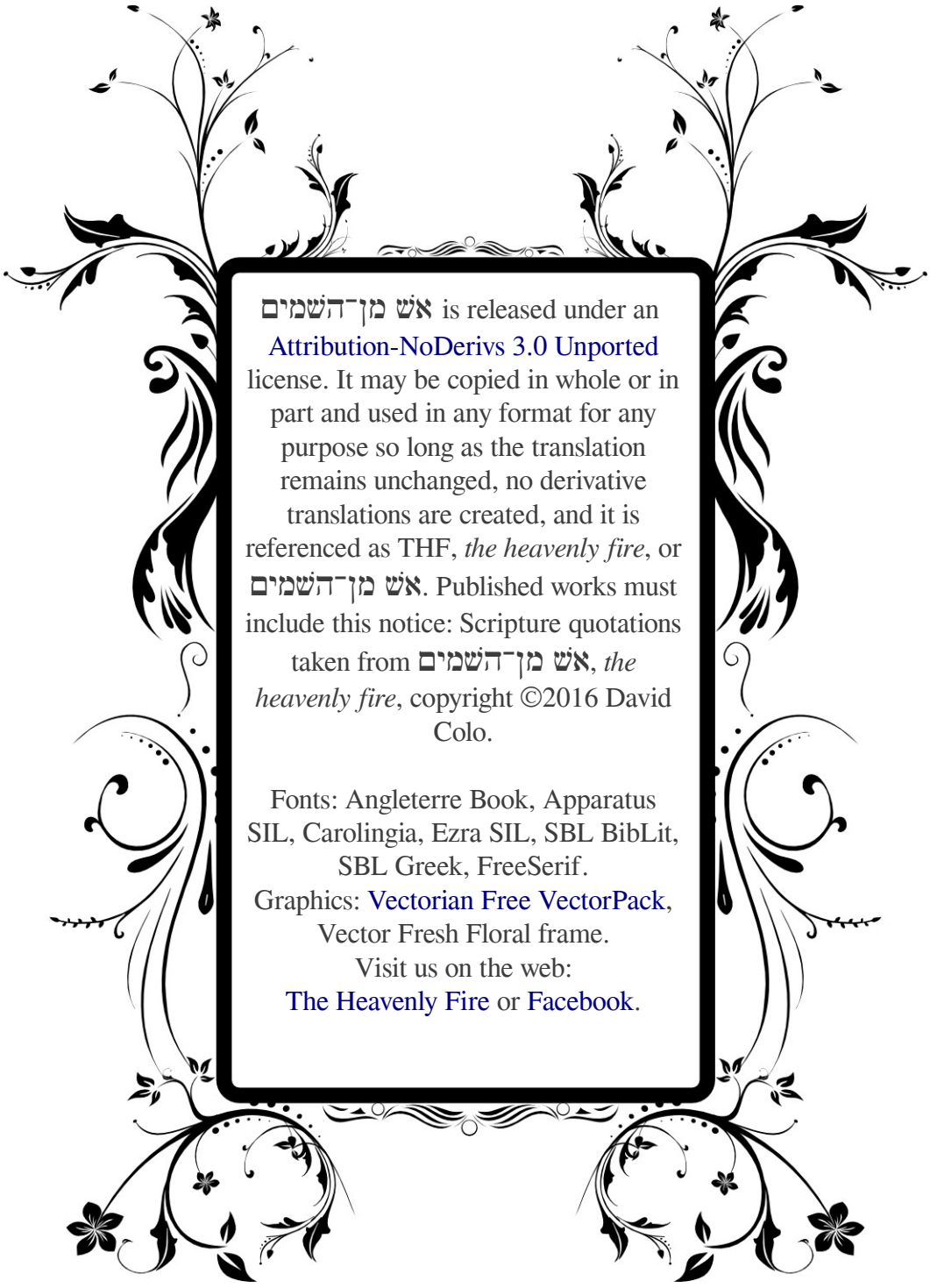


אֵשׁ מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם
the heavenly fire



שְׁמוֹת
Exodus

David Colo



אש מן־השמים is released under an [Attribution-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported](#) license. It may be copied in whole or in part and used in any format for any purpose so long as the translation remains unchanged, no derivative translations are created, and it is referenced as THF, *the heavenly fire*, or אש מן־השמים. Published works must include this notice: Scripture quotations taken from אש מן־השמים, *the heavenly fire*, copyright ©2016 David Colo.

Fonts: Angleterre Book, Apparatus SIL, Carolingia, Ezra SIL, SBL BibLit, SBL Greek, FreeSerif.

Graphics: [Vectorian Free VectorPack](#), Vector Fresh Floral frame.

Visit us on the web:

[The Heavenly Fire](#) or [Facebook](#).

TABLE OF CONTENTS



| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Sigla and Abbreviations | 2 |
| About the Exodus | 3 |
| THE EXODUS (1-19) | 5 |
| About the Covenant | X |
| THE COVENANT (20-24) | X |
| About the Tabernacle | X |
| THE TABERNACLE (25-40) | X |
| TRANSLATION NOTES | X |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | X |

INTRODUCTION

NAMES AND TERMINOLOGY

1. Of The Translation

“Isn't it true [that] my word [is] like fire,” proclaims YHWH,
 “and like hammer, shatters stone?”
 —Jer 23:29

אש מן־השמים (*’ēš min-haššāmayim*) translates as “the fire from heaven” or, more simply, “**the heavenly fire**” (THF). Such language is drawn from theophanic imagery, which likens the presence of YHWH to various manifestations of fire, and from an ancient Jewish conception of YHWH's word as fire. Early Rabbinic tradition equated the fire that descended from heaven on Sinai with scripture itself. This can be seen, for instance, in the following midrash, which uses a word-play to phonetically link “Torah” (תּוֹרָה) with “its flame” (אֹרֶה): “*Because YHWH descended upon it in fire* (Exod 19:18). This shows that the Torah [is] fire, was given from fire, and is comparable to fire. . . . One can do nothing but warm himself [with] its flame” (*Mek. Bahodesh* 4).

2. Of The Israelite Deity

By way of piety and tradition, the scribes who placed vowel points in the Hebrew manuscripts obscured the name of God by placing under its consonants the vowels of words like Elohim (God), Adonai (My Sovereign/Lord), and Ha-Shem (The Name). Some translations create the hybrid “Jehovah” out of this heterogeneous mix, while others translate the vowels. Still others trace the name back to a hypothetical form of the verb “to be” (Yahweh). Like translations of other religious texts, THF replicates the deity's name when that name is used. Since, however, its full pronunciation was lost, we render the name as we have it and how scribes have written it for the last three millennia: **YHWH** (a font quite different than the rest of the text is used to indicate the name's sacred status—much like how ancient Jews might use the Paleo-Hebrew script). Likewise, “**Elohim**,” “**El**,” and “**Eloah**” are often used instead of “God,” but “**The One God**” when a definite article precedes it. Where the text intends to communicate something other than the deity's name, we follow intently.

SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH

The eclectic text of von Gall, which showed a tremendous bias towards the Masoretic Text in its presentation, is not used by this translation. Instead, we use Samaritan manuscripts published by Blayney (*Pentateuchus Hebraeo-Samaritanus*), Kennicott (*Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum*), and Shoulson (The Torah: Jewish and Samaritan versions compared), with comparison against Tsedaka (The Israelite Samaritan Version of the Torah), which claims to represent the traditional text used by present-day Samaritans. For an English translation, see שֵׁבֶט אֶפְרַיִם, *staff of Ephraim*.

the heavenly fire

Sigla and Abbreviations

| | |
|----------------|--|
| √ | Verbal root |
| ⲚⲚ | Samaritan Pentateuch |
| ⲃ | Ben Chayyim |
| Ⲙ | Septuagint: Old Greek |
| ⲙ ^D | Masoretic Text: Damascus Codex |
| ⲙ ^L | Masoretic Text: Leningrad Codex |
| ⲙ ^O | Masoretic Text: Oriental 4445 |
| Ⲥ | Syriac Peshitta |
| ⲡ ^O | Targum: Onkelos |
| ⲡ ^N | Targum: Neofiti |
| Ⲟ | Vulgate (Stuttgart) |
| b. | Babylonian Talmud tractate |
| Alter | Robert Alter's The Five Books of Moses |
| ANE | Ancient Near East |
| ARM | <i>Archives royales de Mari</i> |
| Fox | Everett Fox's The Five Books of Moses |
| GKC | Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar (28 th edition) |
| HCSB | Holman Christian Standard Bible |
| JM | Joüon and Muraoka's Grammar of Biblical Hebrew |
| ISV | International Standard Version |
| KJV | Kings James Version |
| KTU | <i>Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit einschliesslich der keilalphabetischen Texte ausserhalb Ugarits, 1: Transkription</i> |
| MS(S) | Manuscript(s) |
| NASB | New American Standard Bible |
| NJPST | New Jerusalem Publication Society Tanakh |
| NRSV | New Revised Standard Version |
| Rotherham | Rotherham's The Emphasized Bible |
| SET | Stone Edition Tanach |
| SOE | <i>staff of Ephraim</i> |
| The Three | Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion |
| YLT | Young's Literal Translation |

Message

Historical Stuff

Form and Genre

The Exodus

Chapter 1

8

¹ Now these [are] the names of Israel's children who came into Egypt. With Jacob, each [man] and his household came:

² Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah.

³ Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin.

⁴ Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher.

⁵ And so, of every life having emerged from Jacob's thigh, 70 [was] the sum. Joseph, however, was in Egypt.

⁶ Joseph died, and all his brothers—that is, that whole generation. ⁷ Yet Israel's descendants were fertile; they swarmed, proliferated, and were so extremely vast that the land was full of them.

⁸ Then arose a new king over Egypt who did not know Joseph. ⁹ He said to his people, “Look, a people [are] Israel's children, more numerous and vast than us! ¹⁰ Come, let us be wily about him. Otherwise, he will proliferate. And it may be, should war break out, [that] even he will be allied with our detesters in order to fight against us and go up from the land.”

¹¹ So they placed over him chiefs of servitude in order to abuse him with their subjugation. He built storage cities for Pharaoh: Pithom and Rameses.

¹² But the more he abused him, the more he proliferated and burst out [in number]. And they were alarmed [by] the presence of Israel's descendants.

¹³ So they (Egypt) imposed work [on] Israel's descendants rigorously. ¹⁴ They made their lives bitter with hard work in mud, and in bricks, and in all the work in the field—with all their work that they worked among them rigorously.

¹⁵ Egypt's king pronounced to the Hebrew midwives (of whom the name of the first [was] Shiphrah and the name of the second [was] Puah)

¹⁶ a pronouncement: “during the delivering of the Hebrew [women], you must look at the two 'stones.' If a son [is] he, you must slay him. But if a daughter [is] she, she may live.”

¹⁷ Yet the midwives feared The One God and did not do what Egypt's king pronounced to them. They kept the boys alive. ¹⁸ So Egypt's king called for the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this thing? [Why] did you keep the boys alive?”

¹⁹ The midwives replied [to] Pharaoh, “Because different from the Egyptian women [are] the Hebrew [women]. Yes, animals [are] they! Before the midwife comes to them, they have given birth!”

²⁰ Elohim treated the midwives well. And the people proliferated and were extremely vast. ²¹ (So it was [that] because the midwives feared The One God, he founded for them lineages.)

²² Then Pharaoh commanded this of all his people: “Every newborn son—toward the Nile, you must fling him. But every daughter, you may keep alive.”

Chapter 2

9

(very old translation)

1 Now, a man came from the house of Levi and he took a daughter of Levi.

2 And the woman conceived and bore a son. And she saw that he [was] beautiful and she hid him for three months.

3 When she was unable to hide him any longer, she took a papyrus ark for him and covered it with bitumen and pitch. Then she put the boy in it and set [it] among the reeds at the edge of the Nile.

4 Now, his sister positioned herself at a distance to know what would happen to him.

5 And the daughter of Pharaoh descended to bathe beside the Nile. And her young women were walking along the bank of the Nile. And she saw the ark in the midst of the reeds. And she sent her female slave and she retrieved it.

6 And she opened and saw the boy. And, see, the boy is crying! And she felt compassion for him. And she said, “One of the children of the Hebrews [is] this.”

7 And his sister said to the daughter of Pharaoh, "Should I go and summon for you a nurse from the Hebrew women? Then she may nurse the boy for you."

8 And the daughter of Pharaoh said to her, "Yes." And the young woman went and summoned the mother of the child.

9 And the daughter of Pharaoh said to her, "Take this child with you and nurse him for me and I will pay your expenses." And the woman took the child and nursed him.

10 And the boy grew up and she brought him to the daughter of Pharaoh. And he became a son for her. And she called his name Moses. And she said, "Surely I pulled him out from the water."

11 Now, it happened in those days that Moses grew up and went out to his kinsmen and he saw their burden. And he saw an Egyptian man striking a Hebrew man—one of his kinsmen.

12 And he turned this [way] and that and he saw that no one [else] was present. And he struck the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

13 And he went out on the next day and, see, two quarreling Hebrew men! And he said to the one in the wrong, "Why do you strike your fellow?"

14 And he said, "Who established you as a captain and a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me just as you killed the Egyptian?" And Moses was afraid and he thought, "Surely the thing is known."

15 And Pharaoh heard about that event and sought to slay Moses. So Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian. And he sat beside the well [of that place].

16 Now, seven daughters belonged to the priest of Midian. And they came up, drew water, and filled the troughs in order to water their father's flock.

17 But the shepherds came up and drove them away. And Moses stood up, **came to their aid**, and watered their flock.

18 And they came in to Re'uale their father. And he said, "Why did you hasten to enter today?"

19 And they said, "An Egyptian man **delivered** us

from the hand of the shepherds. And he even drew water for us and watered the flock."

20 And he said to his daughters, "So where [is] he? Why [is] it [that] you abandoned the man? Call him [over] and let him eat food."

21 And Moses agreed to remain with the man. And he gave his daughter, Zipporah, to Moses.

22 And she bore a son and he called his name Gayre'shom because he said, "A sojourner I was in a foreign land."

23 Now, it happened after many of these days that the king of Egypt died. And the children of Israel groaned from their labor and cried out. And their cry for rescue from labor ascended to The One God.

24 And Elohim heard their groaning. And Elohim remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

25 And Elohim saw the children of Israel. And Elohim was concerned.

Chapter 3

א

(very old translation)

1 Now, Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, a priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the west [side] of the desert. And he came to the mountain of The One God, [namely] toward Horeb.

2 And the messenger of YHWH appeared to him in a blaze of fire in the midst a shrub. And he looked and saw the shrub burning in the fire, yet it was not being scorched!

3 And Moses thought, "I should turn aside now so I may see this magnificent sight—why is the shrub not burning?"

4 And YHWH saw that he turned aside to stare.

And Elohim called to him from the midst of the shrub. He said, "Moses. Moses." He replied, "I am here."

5 He said, "Do not draw near here. Take your sandals off of your feet because the place upon

which you are standing [is] holy ground.”

6 He said, “I [am] the god of your father—the god of Abraham, the god of Isaac, and the god of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look toward The One God.

7 YHWH said, “I have clearly seen the misery of my people who [are] in Egypt and their plaintive cry from before their taskmasters, I have heard. Surely I know their suffering.

8 So I came down to rescue them from the grip of Egypt and to bring them up from that land to a good and broad land—to a land gushing milk and honey—to the region of the Canaanite and the Hittite, the Amorite and the Perizzite, the Hivvite and the Jebusite.

9 And now, see, the cry of the Israelites came to me and I have also seen the oppression that the Egyptians were inflicting [upon] them.

10 And now, go! For I hereby send you to Pharaoh. And you must bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.”

11 But Moses said to The One God, “Who [am] I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

12 He replied, “Surely, I Will Be with you and this [will be] your sign that I have sent you: when you bring out the people from Egypt, you will serve The One God upon this mountain.”

13 Moses said to The One God, “Look, I will go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The god of your fathers sent me to you,’ but they will say to me, ‘What is his name?’ What will I say to them?”

14 And Elohim said to Moses, “I Will Be Who I Will Be.” So he said, “So will you say to the Israelites: ‘I Will Be sent me to you.’

20 I hereby send you

Chapter 4 ד

Chapter 5 ה

Chapter 6 ו

Chapter 7 ז

Chapter 8 ח

Chapter 9 ט

Chapter 15 טו

Chapter 16 י

Chapter 17 יז

16 – western interpreters don't divide the word, easterners do – giving “throne of Yah”

Chapter 18 יח

Chapter 19 יט

(very old translation)

1 On the third new moon of the outgoing of the children of Israel from the land of Egypt—that very day, they entered the desert of Sinai.

2 They pulled up [their tents] from Rephidim, entered the desert of Sinai, and pitched [them] in the waste. Israel encamped there before the mountain.

3 And Moses ascended toward The One God. And YHWH called to him from the mountain, ordering,

“Say thus to the abode of Jacob;
so declare to the offspring of Israel:

4 ‘You saw what I did to Egypt, how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you [out] to me.

5 And now, if you diligently listen to my voice and observe my covenant, even though all the earth is mine, then you will become my treasured possession more than all the peoples.

6 And you will become for me a kingdom of

priests, a sacred race.'

These [are] the words that you must speak to the offspring of Israel."

7 And Moses entered [the camp] and called to the elders of the people. And he set before them all these words that YHWH commanded him.

8 And all the people testified, "Everything that YHWH spoke, we will do." **And Moses reported the words of the people to YHWH.**

9 And YHWH said to Moses, "See, I am coming out toward you within a cloud of the cloud so that the people would hear when I speak with you and also trust in you perpetually." **And Moses announced the people's words to YHWH.**

10 And YHWH said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. They must wash their garments.

11 And they will be prepared by the third day. On the third day, YHWH will surely descend upon the mount of Sinai for the eyes of all the people.

12 You must set boundaries round about for the people, saying, 'Be on guard for yourselves [from] going up on the mountain or reaching for its edge. Every one who touches the mountain must be killed.'

13 A hand must not touch it because he will surely be stoned or shot through [with arrows]. Whether person or beast, he must not live. When the ram's horn goes off, they may go up on the mountain.

14 And Moses descended from the mountain to the people. And he consecrated the people and they washed their garments.

15 And he said to the people, "Be prepared by the third day [from now]. You must not draw near to a woman."

16 And it happened on the third day when dawn had come [that] there were thunderings, lightning flashes, and a heavy cloud upon the mountain. And the blast of the shophar [was] exceedingly strong. And all the people who [were] in the camp

trembled.

17 And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet The One God. And they positioned themselves on the lowest [part] of the mountain.

18 Now, the entire mount of Sinai was smoking because YHWH descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of the furnace and all the mountain trembled vigorously.

19 While the blast of the shophar rang stronger and stronger, Moses would speak and The One God would answer him with a voice.

20 And YHWH descended upon the mount of Sinai to the summit of the mountain. And YHWH summoned Moses toward the summit of the mountain and Moses ascended.

21 And YHWH said to Moses, "Descend. Warn the people **lest they throw down [the boundaries]** to YHWH to espy and a multitude of them fall.

22 And also, the priests who have brought themselves near to YHWH must consecrate themselves **otherwise YHWH may break out against them.**"

23 And Moses said to YHWH, "The people are unable to ascend the mount of Sinai because you warned us, saying, 'Set boundaries to the mountain and consecrate it.'"

24 And YHWH said to him, "Go down, then ascend—you and Aaron with you. But the priests and the people must not throw down [the boundaries] to ascend to YHWH, otherwise he will break out against them."

25 And Moses descended to the people **and spoke to them.**

Message

Historical Stuff

Form and Genre

The Covenant

Chapter 20

כ

(very old translation)

¹ Then Elohim spoke all these things:² “I, YHWH, [am] your god—he who brought you out of Egypt-land—
out of the house of slaves.³ There must not be for you [any] other gods in
my Presence. ⁴ You must not make yourself a cult
statue or any representationof what [is] in the sky up high,
or what [is] on the earth down below,
or what [is] in the subterranean sea.⁵ You must not do them obeisance and you must
not be enslaved [to] them because I, YHWH your
god, [am] a jealous deity, meting out vengeance
[for] ancestral iniquity upon the children,
grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of my
detestors, ⁶ but acting kindly toward thousands who
love me and who obey my commandments.⁷ Do not elevate the name of YHWH your god
for emptiness, for YHWH will not acquit whoever
elevates his name for emptiness.⁸ Remember to sanctify the day of the Sabbath.
⁹ For six days you should work and accomplish all
your labor, ¹⁰ but the seventh day [is] a Sabbath to
YHWH your god. Do not do any labor, you, your
son or your daughter, your [male] slave or your
female slave, your cattle, or the sojourner of yours
who [is] inside your gates, ¹¹ for [in] six days
YHWH made **the sky, the earth, the sea**, and all
that [is] in them, then he rested on the seventh day.
YHWH therefore blessed the day of the Sabbath
and sanctified it.¹² Honor your father and your mother so your
days may be prolonged upon **the land that**
YHWH your god is giving you.¹³ Do not murder¹⁴ Do not commit adultery.¹⁵ Do not steal.¹⁶ Do not testify against your neighbor [as] a

deceptive witness.

¹⁷ Do not covet the house of your neighbor. Do
not covet your neighbor's wife, his [male] slave, his
female slave, his bull, his male ass, or all that
belongs to your neighbor.”¹⁸ And all the people perceived the thunderings,
the fiery lights, the blast of the shophar, and the
mountain smoking. And the people saw, they
trembled, and they stood at a distance. ¹⁹ And they
said to Moses, “Speak with us, yourself, and we
will listen. But do not let Elohim speak with us,
otherwise we will die.”²⁰ And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear.
Surely [it was] for the purpose of testing you [that]
The One God came and so that the fear of him
would occur before you. You must not sin.”²¹ And the people stood at a distance, but
Moses drew near to the dense cloud within which
[was] The One God. ²² And YHWH said to
Moses, “Speak thusly to the Isrealites—they
perceived that **from the sky** I spoke with them:²³ You must not make [anything] in addition to
me. Gods of silver and gods of gold, you must not
make for yourselves.²⁴ An altar of earth you must make for me and
sacrifice upon it your atonement offerings and
celebratory peace meals, your flocks and cattle.**In every place** where my name is praised, **I will**
come to you and bless you.²⁵ But if you make for me an altar of stone, do
not construct it of ashlar for you have swung your
chisel upon it and profaned it.²⁶ You must not ascend the steps of my altar.
[It is] one upon [which] your nakedness must not
be exposed.

Chapter 21

כא

¹ Now, these are the laws that you must set before
them:² When you buy a Hebrew slave, six years he may
serve. But in the seventh [year], he must go out a

free [person] with nothing.

3 If he comes in alone, he must go out alone. If the husband of a woman [is] he, his wife must go out with him.

4 If his master gives him a wife and she bears sons or daughters for him, the woman—and her children—will become the possession of her master and he must go out alone.

5 And if the slave declares aloud, “I love my master, my wife, and my children. I will not go out a free [person],”

6 then his master should bring him near to The One God and bring him to the door or the doorpost.

Then his master should pierce his ear with the perforator and he (the slave) will serve him in perpetuity.

7 When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she must not go out as the going out of the male slaves.

8 If she is bad in the eyes of her master who appointed her for himself, then he must let her be ransomed. He has no power to sell her to a foreign people when he acted faithlessly with her.

9 But if for his son he appointed her, he must do for her according to the custom of daughters.

10 If he takes another [woman] for himself, he must not reduce her [portion of] meat, clothing, or marital intercourse.

11 But if these three [things] he does not accomplish for her, then she must go out without any money.

12 The one who strikes a person [so] that they die must [also] suffer death.

13 But whoever does not lie in wait [so] that Elohim caused it by his hand, then I will set up an area there for you where you may seek refuge.

14 When a man acts presumptuously against his neighbor to slay him through cunning, away from my altar you must take him to be executed.

15 And one who strikes their father or their mother must suffer death.

16 And one who kidnaps a man and sells him and [whoever] is found [with him] in their hand, must

suffer death.

17 And one who curses their father or their mother must suffer death.

18 When men dispute and a man hits his neighbor with stone or fist, and he doesn't die, but collapses to a bed,

19 if he rises and walks around outside [leaning] on his stick, then the one who struck is innocent. Only, he must pay [for] his sitting[time] and aid [as] he recuperates.

20 And if a man strikes his [male] slave or female slave with a staff and s/he dies under his hand, he must suffer vengeance.

21 However, if he endures a day or two, he must not be avenged because his wealth [is] he.

22 When men struggle together and injure a pregnant woman and her babes come out, but a harmed one does not come about, he shall be fully fined as [much as] the husband of the woman will appoint concerning it and pay [it] to magistrates.

23 But if a harmed one [does] come about, you must give life in place of life.

24 Eye in place of eye. Tooth in place of tooth.

Hand in place of hand. Foot in place of foot.

25 Burn in place of burn. Bruise in place of bruise.

Lash in place of lash.

26 When a man strikes the eye of his [male] slave or the eye of his female slave and destroys it, as a free [person], he must send him away in place of his eye.

27 And if a tooth of his [male] slave or a tooth of his female slave he causes to fall [out], as a free [person], he must send him away in place of his tooth.

28 And when a bull gores a man or woman and s/he dies, it will surely be stoned and its meat must not be eaten, but the owner of the bull [is] innocent.

29 But if it [was] a goring bull previously and he was warned—that is, the owners of it—but did not keep it [under control] and a man or woman is killed, the bull must be stoned and he must also be

killed—the owners of it.

30 If a ransom is placed upon him, then he must pay the ransom for his life according to all that is placed upon him.

31 Or [if] it gores a male or female child, it must be done to him according to this judgment.

32 If the bull gores a male [slave] or female slave, thirty shekels of silver must he give to his/her master and the bull must be stoned.

33 When a man opens a pit or digs a well and does not cover it and a bull or male ass falls therein,

34 the owner of the hole must make amends. He must bring silver to its owner, but the dead [beast] will be his own.

35 When the bull of a man injures the bull of his neighbor and it dies, they must sell the living bull and divide its value and they must also divide the dead one.

36 Or [if] it is known that it [was] a goring bull previously, but the owner of it did not keep it [under control], he must fully repay a bull in place of the bull and the dead [one] will become his own.

37 When a man steals a bull or a kid and slaughters or sells it, five [head of] cattle he must repay in place of the bull and four [head of] sheep in place of the kid.

Chapter 22

כב

1 If the thief while trespassing, is discovered, struck, and dies, there is no bloodshed [penalty] for him.

2 If the sun rises upon him, a bloodshed [penalty] belongs to him. He must fully repay. If nothing belongs to him, he must be sold for his stolen [thing].

3 If the stolen [thing] should be discovered in his hand—either bull, male ass, or kid—alive, he must repay double.

4 When a man allows a field or vineyard to be grazed over and sends forth his cow and grazes [it] in the field of another [person], the best of his field or the best of his vineyard he must repay.

5 When fire breaks forth and finds thorn bushes such that a heap or standing grain or the field is consumed, the igniter must fully repay [for] the burning.

6 When a man gives money or items to his neighbor to watch [over] and it is stolen from the man's house, if the thief is found, he must repay double.

7 If the thief is not found, then the owner of the house must be brought near to The One God if his hand did not reach out for the wares of his neighbor.

8 Concerning every matter of occurrence regarding **a bull, male ass, kid, mantle**—regarding every lost [thing], which one says “surely this [is] it,” the word of the two of them must enter in before The One God. Whomever Elohim declares guilty must fully repay his neighbor.

9 When a man gives to his neighbor a **male ass or bull or kid** and any animal to watch [over], but it dies or has [something] broken or is taken captive without a watcher,

10 an oath of YHWH must occur between the two of them whether he did not reach out his hand against the wares of his neighbor. Then the owners of it will receive [that] and he will not repay.

11 But if he really did steal [it] away from him, he must offer recompense to the owners of it.

12 If it should be torn asunder, let him bring it as evidence. He will not offer recompense [for] the torn [animal].

13 When a man requests [something] from his neighbor and it has [something] become broken or dies, [if] the owners of it [are] not with it, he must fully repay.

14 If its owners [are] with it, he should not repay. If it is a hired [animal], it entered in against its wage.

15 And when a man should entice a virgin who has not been betrothed and “lays down” with her, he must surely acquire her for himself as a wife.

16 If her father resolutely refuses to give her to him, he must weigh out silver according to the

bridal compensation of the virgins.

17 Do not let a female shaman live.

18 Every one who “lays with” a beast must suffer death.

19 A sacrificer of The One God must be devoted to destruction unless to YHWH alone [he sacrifices].

20 Do not oppress a sojourner and do not bear down on him. For sojourners were you in the land of Egypt.

21 Any widow or orphan, do not **violate**.

22 If you should **violate** [that] one, then when s/he cries out to me for help, I will listen attentively to the outcry of [that] one,

23 my anger will be kindled, and **I will slay you** with the sword. Then your wives will become widows and your children, orphans.

24 If you lend silver to my people, to the wretched among you, do not be toward [that] one like a lender. Do not place interest against it.

25 If you keep your neighbor's mantle as security, you must return it to him by the setting of the sun

26 because it [is] his only covering. It [is] his garment for his skin. In what will he sleep? Then it may be that he cries out to me for help and I will hear because I [am] gracious.

27 Do not curse Elohim. And the ruler among your people, do not imprecate.

28 Your fullness and your best, do not withhold. The firstborn of your children, you must surrender to me.

29 You must do likewise for your bull [and] your sheep. [For] seven days, let it be with its mother. On the eighth day, [however,] you must surrender it to me.

30 [Any] torn flesh of the field, you must not devour. Cast it to the canine.

Chapter 23

כג

1 Do not carry a deceitful report. Your hand should not be set alongside a criminal to become a

malicious witness.

2 Do not become followers of multitudes toward evil [things]. Do not turn to reach followers of multitudes.

3 And a powerless [person], do not treat with distinction in his/her dispute.

4 When you encounter the bull of your enemy or his male ass wandering around, you must respectfully restore it to him.

5 When you see the male ass of one who hates you lying down beneath its load, then cease from abandoning it. You must leave with it.

6 Do not turn aside the judgment of your enemy in his/her lawsuit.

7 Stay far away from a deceptive word. And the innocent and the righteous, do not kill because I will not declare the wicked [one] righteous.

8 And a bribe, do not take because the bribe will blind the clear-sighted [one] and distort the words of the righteous [ones].

9 And the sojourner, do not squeeze out. You know the life of the sojourner because you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

10 Six years, you may sow your land and gather its produce,

11 but the seventh [year], leave [it] untilled, abandon it, and let the needy [ones] of your people consume [it] and their excess will be consumed [by] the living [creatures] of the field. You must do the same for your vineyard [and] for your olive [crop].

12 Six days you may accomplish your labor, but on the seventh day you must rest in order that your bull and your male ass may rest and the son of your female slave and the sojourner may draw breath.

13 Now, according to everything that I spoke to you, be on guard. Do not **profess** the name of other gods. It must not be heard on your mouth.

14 Three **times** you must celebrate a pilgrimage feast to me during the year.

15 You must observe The Festival of Matsah

Loaves. [For] seven days, eat matsah loaves as I commanded you at the assembly of the new moon of Abib because you came out from Egypt in that [month]. And no one may appear before me empty-handed.

16 Also the Festival of The Harvest of the First Fruits of your labor, which you sowed in the field. [And] also the Festival of Ingathering when the year goes out, [namely] when you gather your produce from the field.

17 Three **times** in the year, all your **males** must appear before The Lord, YHWH.

18 Do not sacrifice with leaven the blood of my sacrifice. My festival fat must not stay overnight until morning.

19 The beginning of the first fruits of your soil you must bring in [to] the house of YHWH your Elohim.

Do not cook a kid in the milk of its mother.

20 Look! I am one who is sending **a messenger** before you to observe you on the way and to bring you in to the place that I have prepared.

21 Be wary of his presence and listen to his voice. Do not make him bitter because he will not bear your rebellion for my name [is] in his midst.

22 For if you listen carefully to his voice and do all that I will say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and I will be an adversary to your adversaries.

23 Surely **my messenger** will go before you and lead you in to [the place of] the Amorite, Hittite, Perizzite, and Canaanite, the Hivvite and Yebusite, and I will destroy him.

24 Do not bow down to their gods and do not serve them. And do not behave according to their deeds. Rather, you must destroy them and you must smash their standing stones to pieces.

25 You must serve YHWH your God and he will bless your bread and your water. And I will remove sickness from **your midst**.

26 Women will not miscarry or be barren in your land. The number of your days, I will fill.

27 The terror of me, I will send before you and I will confuse all the people whom you go in against. And I will set all your enemies with the back of the neck toward you.

28 And I will send the hornet ahead of you. And it will drive out the Hivvite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from your presence.

29 I will not drive him out from your presence in one year. Otherwise the land will become a deserted waste and the animals of the field will multiply against you.

30 Bit by bit I will drive him out from your presence until whenever you are fruitful and possess the land.

31 And I will set your border from the Reed Sea as far as the Philistine Sea and from the wilderness as far as the river. For I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hand and you will drive them out from your presence.

32 Do not cut a covenant with them or with their gods.

33 They must not dwell in your land otherwise they will cause you to sin against me. If you serve their gods, then it will become a snare for you.

Chapter 24

Message

Historical Stuff

Form and Genre

The Tabernacle

the heavenly fire

Chapter 25

Chapter 26

Chapter 27

Chapter 28

Chapter 29

Chapter 30

Chapter 31

Chapter 32

32 “And now, if only you would carry [away] their sin... But if nothing [will be done], please sponge me out from your scroll that you inked.”

33 Then YHWH replied to Moses, “Whomever [it is] that sinned against me, I will sponge that one out from my scroll.”

.....
.....

Chapter 33 לג

Chapter 34 לד

Chapter 35 לה

Chapter 36 לו

Chapter 37 לז

Chapter 38 לח

Chapter 39 לט

Chapter 40 מ

The total number of verses
in this book [is] X.
And the half-way point
[is] “X.”
And [there are] X reading divisions.

TRANSLATION NOTES



the heavenly fire

- 1:1 **Now these** — וְנִלְ, וְנִדְ, and וְנִו begin Exodus with *waw*. This is supported by 4Qpaleo-Gen-Exod^l, however, lacks the *waw* and is supported by 6. It seems that there were multiple Hebrew MSS floating around with both readings. The beginning was probably composed in order to serve as a bridge between Genesis and the material in this scroll. As such, it is probably mimicking its language. In fact, the first half of Exod 1:1 is identical to the first half of Gen 46:8: ואלה שמות בני ישראל הבאים מצרימה (Now these [are] the names of the Israelites who came into Egypt). Note that Lev and Num also begin with *waw*. As Cassuto notes (*A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*), the force of the conjunction is “now.” So Rotherham, Fox, KJV, and NASB.
- Israel's children** — Because the descendants of Israel were not yet a nation, most translations render this “sons” or “children” of Israel instead of “Israelites.” Note, however, ISV.
- into Egypt. With Jacob** — This is rendered according to the Masoretic pointing. Some translations move the *athnach* from “Egypt” to “Jacob” (who came into Egypt with Jacob). 4QExod^b and 4Qpaleo-Gen-Exod^l have את יעקב אביהם (with Jacob *their father*). This is supported by 6, but missing from וְנִלְ, וְנִדְ, וְנִו, 4Q, 4Q^N, and 5. It is possible, again, that multiple Hebrew MSS were floating around with both readings. Because of the scrupulousness of the Masoretes, we stick with וְנִלְ.
- each [man]** — It is quite common for the noun אִישׁ (man) to be used in a distributive sense, meaning “each/every.” That is certainly the case here (each man being the 12 sons of Jacob)—as virtually all English translations attest. Note, however, the very odd divergence by YLT.
- 1:2 **Simeon, Levi,** — 4Q has *waw* (and) before both Simeon and Levi.
- and Judah** — Curiously, 6 does not have “and” before Judah.
- 1:3 **Issachar** — 4Q has *waw* (and) before Issachar, which is supported by 4Qpaleo-Gen-Exod^l and 4QGen-Exod^a.
- Zebulun** — 4Q has *waw* (and) before Zebulun. 4QGen-Exod^a and 4QExod^b do not.
- Zebulun, and Benjamin** — 4QExod^b has “Zebulun, Joseph, and Benajmin,” making the list of Jacob's sons 13. Joseph is not mentioned in any other MS. Note that the first six sons of Leah, Jacob's first wife, are given at the beginning of this list in order from oldest to youngest, followed by Benjamin, Rachel's son.
- 1:4 **Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher.** — Note that the sons of the maidservants come last in the list—after the more “legitimate” sons of Jacob's wives. The first two are grouped together because they come from the maidservant of Leah (the eldest wife). The second two are grouped together because they come from the maidservant of Rachel (the younger wife).
- 1:5 **And so** — Verse 5 begins with וַיְהִי. It is the masculine singular form, which could take “every life,” as its subject. More often, however, it is used to introduce an event or state of affairs that follows some preceding event or state of affairs. In this case, it is used to conclude the scene. It should, therefore, be treated separately as a turn of the narrative (“and so” or “so it was that”). The use of the disjunctive accent *revia*, supports that function. Curiously, almost all English translations ignore this function except Rotherham (And it came to pass that...). Instead, they

treat it as if it were only there to describe the number (see SOE).

life — Alternatively, “person.”

having emerged — Literally, “of those emerging.” The frequentative sense of the participle is communicated by our addition of the word “having.”

Jacob's thigh — A euphemism for “loins” or “genitals.” Typical in THF, when the text uses a euphemism, so do we. When the text uses more vulgar or obscene language, so do we.

70 [was] the sum — Literally, “70 [was] the life.” The number is taken from Gen 46:27. See also Deut 10:22. In support of the number 70 are several ancient texts like Jubilees (44:33) and Josephus (*Antiquities* 2.214). The number of the sons of Israel is also related to the number of the nations, which 1 Enoch 89:59 sets at 70. Instead of “70,” ❸ has “75.” That is supported by 4QGen-Exod^a and 4QExod^b. It seems, therefore, that there were multiple Hebrew MSS floating around with both readings, but “70” was the more official or more accepted number.

Joseph, however, was in Egypt. — Literally, “But Joseph was in Egypt.” ❸ places this at the end of v. 4.

1:6 **that is** — We take this *waw* as epexegetical. So Propp (AYB): “the sense might be ‘that is.’”

1:7 **vast** — וַיִּעֲצֻמוּ means either “they became strong” or “they became vast.” As is obvious from the rest of the verbs (be fruitful, swarm, proliferate, fill the land), this refers to number, not strength or might. So HCSB and LEB (numerous), NJPST (increased), and Alter (vast).

the land was full of them — Fulfilling the command in Gen 1:28 to be fertile, to proliferate, and to fill the land/earth.

1:8 **a new king** — ❸ says “another” king, but The Three agree with מֶלֶךְ.

1:9 **a people [are] Israel's children** — Alternatively, “the people of Israel's children...” (construct) or “the people, Israel's children...” (apposition). We have gone with the copula, however, because the point, we believe, is to indicate what kind of people they have become—a people who are more vast and numerous than the Egyptians.

vast — עֲצוּם is an adjective meaning both “mighty/strong” and “vast.” Most translations choose “mighty/strong” here. Note, however, that the same words that the narrator uses to describe the children of Israel in v. 7 are repeated by Pharaoh in this verse. They should, therefore, function the same way semantically. Just as Israel is said to become “numerous and vast,” so Pharaoh states that Israel is “numerous and vast.” See 1:7.

1:10 **about him** — Translation literal. The singular pronoun (him) refers back to the singular subject (people). The Talmud found this questionable: “Come, let us deal wisely with him — it should have been with them! — R. Hama b. Hanina said: [Pharaoh meant,] Come and let us outwit the Saviour of Israel” (*b. Sotah* 11a, Soncino).

proliferate — Again, Pharaoh repeats the words used by the narrator to describe the state of Israel. This indicates that, once again, it is about numbers, not strength. See also v. 12, which is about numbers, not strength.

should war break out — The נָה at the end of this verb is an energetic ending, which “probably indicated a certain energetic meaning” (JM §61f). For this reason, we have chosen a more animated rendering than “should war befall/come about.” Instead of תִּקְרָאנָה, ❸ has a more typical form with first-person plural suffix תִּקְרָאנִי. See SOE.

[that] even — This emphatic particle is ignored by most translations.

in order to fight against us — \mathfrak{T}^N adds, “and set over themselves a king.”

1:11 to abuse him — \mathfrak{M}^L has a singular suffix (him). This is supported by 4QGen-Exod^a and so rendered here. \mathfrak{W} , however, has the plural (them). That is supported by \mathfrak{G} , \mathfrak{T}^O , \mathfrak{T}^N , \mathfrak{S} , and \mathfrak{V} .

subjugation — The precise nuance of this word is uncertain. It occurs six times—all within Exod 1-6 and all with the same meaning. Though literally plural, we take it as a collective singular.

He built — \mathfrak{M}^L has a singular form of the verb (he built). This is supported by 4QGen-Exod^a and so rendered here. \mathfrak{W} , however, has the plural form (they built). That is supported by \mathfrak{G} , \mathfrak{T}^O , \mathfrak{T}^N , \mathfrak{S} , and \mathfrak{V} .

storage — As evident from 2 Chr 32:28, this word refers to places where grain, wine, and other commodities are stored.

Pithom and Rameses — \mathfrak{T}^N says “Tanis and Pelusium.” \mathfrak{T}^O agrees with \mathfrak{M}^L . \mathfrak{G} adds, “and On, which is Heliopolis.”

1:12 abused him — \mathfrak{M}^L has a singular suffix (him). This is supported by 4QGen-Exod^a and so rendered here. \mathfrak{W} , however, has the plural (them). That is supported by 2QExod^a and \mathfrak{G} and must reflect a parallel textual tradition.

he proliferated — \mathfrak{M}^L has a singular form of the verb (he). This is supported by 4QGen-Exod^a and so rendered here. 2QExod^a and \mathfrak{G} , however, have the plural form (they). \mathfrak{W} has פִּרְהָ (he was fertile) instead of יִרְבֶּה (he proliferated).

and burst out [in number] — Literally, “and the more he burst forth.” 2QExod^a has שָׂרְצוּ (they swarmed) instead. That is unique to 2QExod^a.

1:13 they (Egypt) — Though the subject is singular (Egypt), the verb is plural (they). The Hebrew scribe meant for “Egypt” to be taken as a collective noun.

1:14 with all their work — The אֵל signals a double accusative. In other words, they made their life bitter not just with hard work, but with ALL the work that they worked.

they worked — The previous verse used the Hiphil form of the verb to signal that it was the Egyptians who *made* the people work. Here, however, it is the Qal, which refers to the work itself being performed (literally, “they worked”). Thus, contrary to most translations, its subject must be the Israelites (they who worked) and not the Egyptians. So SET (all their labors that they performed), YLT (all their service in which they have served), and Alter (all their crushing work that they performed).

rigorously. — Uniquely, 2QExod^a repeats information from v. 12. Between this verse and the next, it has “And they (Egypt) were alarmed [by] the presence of Israel's descendants.”

1:15 pronounced — Literally, “said.” The idea here, however, is not simply that Pharaoh was in dialogue with someone, but that he delivered an authoritative decree.

the Hebrew midwives — The way the Masoretes pointed the text, “Hebrew” is an adjective of “midwives.” It could, however, be read “the midwives of the Hebrews,” indicating that the midwives were not, themselves, of Hebrew origin (even though the names are either Hebrew or Proto-Canaanite). This is how \mathfrak{G} rendered it.

(of whom . . . [was] Puah) — The text we include within parentheses is obviously secondary. It interrupts the narrative and is followed by a formal marker called “repetitive resumption” (see

next note). The text outside gives no indication that there were only two midwives. In fact, the sense of the story is that there were multitudes of them. The parenthetical probably represents some very early midrashic commentary on the text by a scribal scholar.

- 1:16 **a pronouncement:** — Literally, “he said.” The verb has been inserted through a technique called *Wiederaufnahme* or “repetitive resumption.” When a text has been expanded, part of the text that preceded the expansion is repeated at the end of the expansion (sometimes verbatim) in order to indicate a continuation from the previous point of departure. In order to capture the repetition of the text, which we previously rendered “pronounced,” we render this “a pronouncement.”

the two 'stones' — The precise nuance of **האבנים** is uncertain. It has a dual ending, indicating exactly “two.” The “stones” are probably a euphemism for buttocks.

[is] she — One common archaic feature of the Pentateuch is the use of **הוא** for both feminine and masculine singular pronouns. Both **וה**^D and **וה**^O have **הוא** (s/he). **וה**^L, however, has **היא** (she). **וה**^L represents a scribal update to the consonantal text in order to better represent the meaning. **וה**^D and **וה**^O better represent the traditional text in this instance.

she may live — Normally, **והיה** would mean “he may live” and “she may live” would be **והיתה**. That, however, represents a later stage of the language. The earlier masculine form was **והי**. To make that feminine, it would then become **והיה**, which occurs here (see GKC §76i). Uniquely, 4QExod^b has “you may preserve her.”

- 1:17 **feared** — The more ancient spelling of “they (feminine) feared” (**ותיראן**) in **וה**^L is modernized by **וה** (**ותיראנה**).

pronounced — Literally, “said.” The idea here, however, is not simply that Pharaoh was in dialogue with someone, but that he delivered an authoritative decree.

They kept alive — The more ancient spelling of “they (feminine) kept alive” (**ותחייין**) in **וה**^L is modernized by **וה** (**ותחיינה**).

- 1:18 **Egypt's king** — Literally, “the king of Egypt.” **וה** has “Pharaoh” instead of “Egypt's king.”

the midwives — Uniquely, 4QExod^b has “the Hebrew midwives.”

you keep alive — The more ancient spelling of “you (feminine) keep alive” (**ותחייין**) in **וה**^L is modernized by **וה** (**ותחיינה**).

- 1:19 **replied** — The more ancient spelling of “they (feminine) said” (**ותאמרן**) in **וה**^L is modernized by **וה** (**ותאמרנה**).

different from — Literally, “not like.”

Yes — Interpreting the second **כי** as asseverative.

animals [are] they — According to the Masoretic punctuation, this should read something like “full of life [are] they.” Alone, however, the consonantal text (**וחיות**) is the plural of “animal.” So the Talmud: “What means *hayoth*? . . . [the meaning is] they said to him, This people are compared to an animal [*hayyah*]” (*b. Sotah* 11b, Soncino). Alter provides some keen

commentary here: “The fact that *ḥayot* as a noun means “animals” may reinforce the strong connection between the Israelites and the procreative forces of the natural world: like animals, the Hebrew women need no midwife” (The Five Books of Moses: a Translation with Commentary, p. 310, n. 19).

1:20 **the people proliferated** — Instead of וַיִּרְבּוּ 's singular verb form (וַיִּרְב), וַיִּרְבּוּ has the plural (וַיִּרְבּוּ). That creates a mismatch between the singular subject and its verb. The same mismatch appeared in v. 13 and may, therefore, be original.

and were extremely vast — וַיִּעֲצֻמוּ means either “they became strong” or “they became vast.” As is obvious from vv. 7 and 9, this language is employed not to indicate strength, but to indicate number.

1:21 **founded for them lineages** — Literally, “gave them houses.” In several places, this refers to a line of ancestry—usually of high standing (1 Sam 25:28; 1 Kgs 2:24). So we interpret it here. That is also how ט^{N} interpreted it: “He made houses for them, the house of kingship and the house of the high priesthood. Miriam took the crown of kingship and Jochabed took the crown of the high priesthood.” The Talmud echoes this idea (*b. Sotah* 11b).

(So it was . . . lineages.) — Why a parenthetical here? Because it answers a question that is no longer relevant to the narrative and is focused on characters that are peripheral to the main story. This seems like midrashic commentary.

1:22 **this** — Literally, “saying.”

Every newborn son — That is, of the Hebrews. This is made explicit by וְכָל (see SOE), ט^{N} , ט^{O} , and ס .

you must fling him — וַיִּפְּלוּ lacks the suffix. See SOE.

3:10 **For** — Literally, “and.”

I hereby send you — In the ANE, a person could be called by a deity to give a prophetic message through use of a particular utterance—the same that occurs here. A prophetic text from Mari, for instance (ARM 26 233), says *inanna alik ašaparka* (Now go! I hereby send you).

3:12 **this [will be] your sign** — Literally, “This [will be] for you the sign” (זֶה־לְךָ הָאוֹת). That phrase occurs in several other places (1 Sam 2:34; 10:1 LXX; 2 Kgs 19:29; 20:9) all of which involve the validation of a prophetic message. The same kind of phrase occurs in non-Israelite prophesy. A prophetic text from Mari (ARM 10 141) says *lū ittum* (This [will be] the sign). Another (ARM 10 117) uses the phrase to state “This [was] the sign.”

19:3 **offspring of Israel** — Alternatively, “house of Israel.” Josephus tells us that Vespasian deposited a Torah scroll in the royal palace in Rome that was confiscated from the Temple in AD 70. When Emperor Severus built a synagogue in Rome, it is reported that he gave that scroll to the Jews there. The “Severus Scroll” was compared to the standard text and a list of differences

recorded. This is one of them. Instead of “to the offspring of Israel” (לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), it had “to the house of Israel” (לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל). The strong parallelism between “abode of Jacob” and “house of Israel” makes it difficult to determine whether it is original or not. Our translation follows the Masoretic Text (מ^L, מ^O, מ^D).

20:1 **things** — Or “words.”

20:2 **I, YHWH, [am] your god** — Most translations render it “I [am] YHWH, your god” based on the placement of the copula in 5. But what is the text trying to say? Is it trying to identify the speaker as YHWH (I [am] YHWH) or is it trying to identify YHWH as their god (I, YHWH, [am] your god)? We think the latter.

20:3 **in my Presence** — Literally, “in my face.” Alternatively, “before me.”

20:4 **the subterranean sea** — Literally, “the water/sea down below the earth.”

20:5 **you must not be enslaved** — Note that the Masoretes accented this as a Hophal. It is not a Qal (you must not serve them). It is the passive form of the causative stem. It means, literally, “be made to serve them.” The text is using a subtle word-play, which we recreate in English. Since they have been freed from the house of “slaves,” they are reminded not to become “enslaved.”

ancestral iniquity — Literally, “the iniquity of ancestors/fathers.”

grandchildren — Literally, “those who are third.”

great-grandchildren — Literally, “those who are fourth.”

of my detestors — Literally, “belonging to” my detestors.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Joüon, Paul, and T Muraoka. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblio, 1991.
- Cassuto, Umberto. *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis: Part I – From Adam To Noah, Genesis I – VI:8*. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1961.
- King, L W. *The Seven Tablets of Creation: Or, the Babylonian and Assyrian Legends Concerning the Creation of the World and of Mankind*. New York: AMS Press, 1976.
- Köhler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, Johann Jakob Stamm, and M. E. J. Richardson. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
- Niditch, Susan. *Oral World and Written Word: Ancient Israelite Literature*. Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.
- Skinner, John. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930.
- Speiser, E A. *Genesis*. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1964.