

FAQ

FROM THE MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS ARCHIVES (2000-2018)

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MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS
messianicapologetics.net

Frequently Asked Questions

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Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as TWOT for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

- ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AMG: *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament*
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament
Ara: Aramaic
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)
b. Babylonian Talmud (*Talmud Bavli*)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.
BDAG: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)
BDB: *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.
CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)
CGL: *Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (2021)
CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)
CJB: *Complete Jewish Bible* (1998)
CJSB: *Complete Jewish Study Bible* (2016)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*
EJ: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*
ESV: *English Standard Version* (2001)
Ger: German
GNT: *Greek New Testament*
Grk: Greek
HALOT: *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler and Baumgartner)
HCSB: *Holman Christian Standard Bible* (2004)
Heb: Hebrew
HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
IDB: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
IDBSup: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*
ISBE: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
IVPBBC: *IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)*
Jastrow: *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (Marcus Jastrow)
JBK: *New Jerusalem Bible-Koren* (2000)
JETS: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
KJV: *King James Version*
Lattimore: *The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore* (1996)
LITV: *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* by Jay P. Green (1986)
LES: *Lexham English Septuagint* (2019)
LS: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott)
LSJM: *Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)
LXE: *Septuagint with Apocrypha* by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
LXX: *Septuagint*
m. Mishnah
MT: *Masoretic Text*
NASB: *New American Standard Bible* (1977)
NASU: *New American Standard Update* (1995)
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*
NEB: *New English Bible* (1970)
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*
NETS: *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (2007)
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*
NIV: *New International Version* (1984)
NJB: *New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic* (1985)
NJSB: *Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (1999)
NKJV: *New King James Version* (1982)
NRSV: *New Revised Standard Version* (1989)
NLT: *New Living Translation* (1996)
NT: *New Testament*
OT: *Old Testament*
REB: *Revised English Bible* (1989)
RSV: *Revised Standard Version* (1952)
t. Tosefta
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLV: *Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life Version* (2014)
TNIV: *Today's New International Version* (2005)
TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*
UBSHNT: *United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition*
v(s). *verse(s)*
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
Vul: *Latin Vulgate*
YLT: *Young's Literal Translation* (1862/1898)
WMB: *World Messianic Bible* (2020)

Exodus, route of

What do you think is the correct route of the Exodus taken by the Ancient Israelites?

The challenge which Biblical scholars have had regarding the route of the Exodus has varied facets to it. While there are certainly some specific details given in the Torah of Ancient Israel's trek from Egypt to Mount Sinai (Exodus chs. 14-19; Numbers 33), too frequently this is more of a list of obscure place names which no longer exist than anything else. While everyone can be agreed that the Israelites moved in territory which today composes the countries of Egypt, Israel, and possibly also Jordan and Saudi Arabia, it is difficult to tell for certain what the exact route was that the Israelites took. Sadly, modern day politics and the volatility of the region, frequently prevent archaeologists from examining the different sites relevant to the Ancient Israelites' journeys. This, of course, may change in the future.

There are three main views of the route of the Exodus, which Biblical scholars and students, do have available to them to consider, in their evaluations of the Israelites' journeys:

1. The **Northern Route Theory** argues that the Israelites crossed Lake Sirbonis, adjacent to the Mediterranean, and that Mount Sinai was located in the northern Sinai Peninsula. This view does not have a wide amount of support today. Notably against it is how God prohibited the Israelites from traveling via a route which would take them into Philistia (Exodus 13:17).
2. The **Southern Route Theory** is the most widely espoused today. It advocates that the Israelites probably crossed between the many marshy, water boundaries (now dry) in the isthmus between Egypt and the Sinai Peninsula, which moved northward from the Gulf of Suez. The Israelites headed south to a site in the Sinai Peninsula, the traditional location of Mount Sinai being Jebel Musa. While there are variations of this viewpoint, one of the main criticisms of it is that the Sinai Peninsula (or at least some of it) was controlled by the Egyptian Empire, and an escape from Egypt would surely have to constitute being completely removed from Pharaoh's jurisdiction.
3. The **Arabian Route Theory** is something which has only been recently suggested. It postulates that the traditional location of Mount Sinai is wrong, and that the Red Sea which the Israelites crossed is today's Gulf of Aqaba, sitting to the east of the modern-day Sinai Peninsula. Since the Sinai Peninsula was still controlled by Egypt, the Israelites could have escaped via the Darb el-Hajj, or a trade route connecting Egypt to Arabia. The volcanic Mount Bedr is proposed as a possible site for Mount Sinai. While there are compelling reasons in favor of this theory, not enough work or investigation has, perhaps, been undertaken at present to confirm it.

Given the three options proposed for the route of the Exodus, there are some good reasons for us to consider the suggestions made by the Arabian Route Theory. It does advocate that the Israelites would be completely out of Egyptian territory before arriving at Mount Sinai. What it lacks is a broad base of scholarly support at present. But, given the great appreciation which evangelical Christians have for the Exodus, as well as the interests of Jewish academia, we can be guaranteed that more investigation into this third proposal will be available in the future.¹

¹ The information summarized here has been largely gathered from Duane A. Garrett, ed. et. al., *NIV Archaeological Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), pp 108-109, 112.