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C0601 – January 4, 2006 – Introduction To The Old Testament & Exodus

I. THE OT CORPUS OF LITERATURE

In contrast to the NT Greek, the majority of the OT was originally written in the Semitic language of Hebrew. A small portion of the OT was originally written in second Semitic language called Aramaic (e.g. Dan 2:4-7:28 and portions of Ezra).

A. OT Divinely Inspired

The OT, like the NT is considered divinely inspired. 3,808 times the OT records that “God said...”, “Thus says the Lord”, “God spoke”, “the Lord spoke” (Exod 25:1), and other introductory formulas. Such formulas are used numerous times in Exodus and indicate that what was communicated to the prophet was ultimately sourced in God (Burning Bush, 3:1-22; God spoke, 4:12; 5:1; 6:1, 2, 10, 28-29; 7:8, 13, 22; 8:1, 5, 16, 20; 9:1, 13, 22; 10:1, 12; 11:1; 13:1, 17; 14:1; et. al.). Until the discovery of the Qumran Scrolls authority rested on the Masoretic Texts, mostly from the 10th century. Recent discoveries of the Qumran Scrolls in various caves near the ancient community of Qumran near the Dead Sea have confirmed a tremendous preservation of the OT. 95%+ of the text is considered accurate, a figure unheard of among ancient documents except in the NT which boasts 98-99% accuracy. There can be no doubt that what we have in Exodus is a near perfect account of the actual events and no archaeological finding has ever nullified the historical record in the Bible. Time and again, secularists are faced with archaeological finds that only confirm what the Bible already said.ⁱ

C. OT Canon Closed

The term *canon* comes from the Greek word *kanon* and means “straight rod, straight edge, ruler”. When applied to literature “canon” has come to refer to those writings which conform to the “rule” or “standard” of divine inspiration and authority. In the English Old Testament there are traditionally 39 individual books considered canonical and in the

Hebrew Old Testament these same books were traditionally twenty-four (or 22) in number. The OT canon was closed around 440-430BC with the Book of Malachi which the Jews called “the seal of the prophets”.

D. Three Divisions of the OT

The Jews organized the OT books into three divisions. You better know this because the Lord Jesus Christ knew and recognized this division. The OT divisions are known as the Tanakh which is an acronym for the three divisions. The first division is the Torah (or Law) composed of the five books of Moses. The second division is the Navi'im (or Prophets) which is further divided into two sub-divisions; the Former Prophets and the Latter Prophets. The third division is the Kethuvim (or Writings) and is composed of eleven books and has one sub-division known as the Megilloth (or Scrolls).

<u>Torah</u>	<u>Navi'im</u>	<u>Kethuvim</u>
Genesis	<u>Former Prophets</u>	Psalms
Exodus	Joshua	Proverbs
Leviticus	Judges	Job
Numbers	Samuel	
Deuteronomy	Kings	<u>Megilloth/Scrolls</u>
		Song of Songs
	<u>Latter Prophets</u>	Ruth
	Isaiah	Lamentations
	Jeremiah	Ecclesiastes
	Ezekiel	Esther
	Twelve Prophets	
		Daniel
		Ezra-Nehemiah
		Chronicles

These three traditional divisions (Torah, Navi'im, and Kethuvim) make up the acronym, **Ta na kh.**

The earliest evidence of this three fold division is found in the *baraita*, a tradition in the Babylonian Talmud around 70-200AD, which is quoted in *Baba Bathra*. This document claims divine inspiration for all twenty-four books and discusses their order. The order of the first five books, the Torah, are fixed because they fit chronologically and were all written by the same author/compiler, Moses. The order of the Latter Prophets and the Writings was not so fixed. This is simply because many of these books were kept in separate scrolls and not in codices (bound books). The codex did not come into use until the early Christian era. Since the Latter Prophets and Writings were separate scrolls, kept together in one box, it should be no surprise that we find different orders in different lists.

One oddity in the traditional Hebrew order is that Chronicles follows Ezra-Nehemiah when the events of Chronicles preceded that of Ezra-Nehemiah. It is not exactly known

why the Hebrews followed this order but it may have been because Ezra-Nehemiah was recognized as canonical before Chronicles. What is interesting is that Jesus Christ recognized the traditional Hebrew text as ending with Chronicles. This is demonstrated in Matthew 23:35 when Christ pronounced judgment on that generation of Israel for

Matt 23:35 “all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.”

Jesus was pronouncing “that generation” guilty of shedding all the righteous blood of the OT! The blood of Abel was shed in the first book considered canonical—Genesis—and the blood of Zechariah was shed in the last book considered canonical—Chronicles—. Zechariah was not the last martyr of the Old Testament *chronologically* (~800BC) but he was the last martyr of the Old Testament in terms of the completed *canon*. So, Jesus was simply saying that they were guilty for all the righteous blood shed in the OT canon. Jesus showed that He was thoroughly in touch with the Hebrew Scriptures, was familiar with the traditional order, and considered the Old Testament canon closed.

The three-fold division is probably quite old. There is a reference to the three-fold division in the Sirach Prolog in 132BC which says,

“For the same things uttered in Hebrew, and translated into another tongue, have not the same force in them: and not only these things, but the law itself, and the prophets, and the rest of the books, have no small difference, when they are spoken in their own language.”ⁱⁱ

The “law” and “prophets” clearly refer to their respective sections and “the rest of the books” were certainly written in Hebrew, therefore probably referring to the “writings”. Jesus referred to the three-fold division in Luke 24:44 when He said,

“These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

The “Law of Moses” and the “Prophets” clearly refer to their respective divisions and the “Psalms” refers to the third division, the “Writings”.ⁱⁱⁱ

A typical way of referring to the entirety of the Hebrew Scriptures was “the Law and the Prophets” or “Moses and the Prophets”.^{iv} Jesus said,

Matthew 5:17 “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

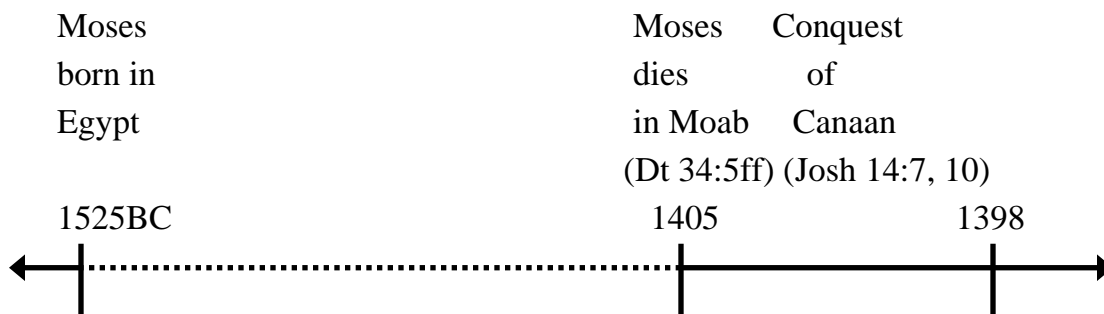
Paul skillfully used “the Law and the Prophets” (i.e. the OT) to testify of Jesus and the kingdom of God even during the church age.

Acts 28:23 When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.

Our book of study, Exodus, is the second book in the first division, the Law (i.e. Torah, Pentateuch).

II. AUTHOR OF THE TORAH (LAW, 1ST FIVE BOOKS, PENTATEUCH)

The first division, the “Torah”, is also known as the “Law” and the “Pentateuch”. It consists of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The order is fixed by chronology and the fact that Moses is the compiler/author of its entirety. From the biblical chronology—which we will treat next week—Moses lived from ~1525-1405BC (Dt 34:7).



The structure of Genesis reveals that Moses was the compiler of Genesis from earlier documents. The key phrase Moses records in Genesis is “these are the generations of” (2:4; 5:1; Gen. 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2; Exod. 6:16, 19; Num. 3:1). Each time Moses uses this phrase he is making a book-end and revealing the source of his knowledge about this section of Genesis (since he lived many years later).

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| ➤ The Tablet of Creation | Gen 1:1-2:4a |
| ➤ The Tablet of Adam | Gen 2:4b-5:1a |
| ➤ The Tablet of Noah | Gen 5:1b-6:9a |
| ➤ The Tablet of Noah’s Sons | Gen 6:9b-10:1 |
| ➤ The Tablet of Shem | Gen 10:2-11:10a |
| ➤ The Tablet of Terah | Gen 11:10b-11:27 |

- The Tablets of Ishmael & Isaac Gen 11:28-25:11-19
- The Tablets of Esau & Jacob Gen 25:20-36:1-37:2

From these “book-ends” it is clear that Moses compiled the first 37 chapters of Genesis under divine inspiration from these clay tablets.^v Thus, some of these clay tablets came through the Flood on the Ark of Noah. This demonstrates that writing (and thus language) did not evolve slowly over time but was used from the beginning of history (albeit a proto-Semitic pictograph language).

What about the last 14 chapters of Genesis? Who wrote the stories about Joseph? Moses wrote them under divine inspiration. We find that God was continually speaking to Moses (Exod 4:30; 6:2, 10, 13, 28-29; 7:8; 13:1; 14:1; 16:11; 19:21; 25:1; 30:11, 17, 22; 31:1, 12; 32:7; 33:1; 40:1). It is very interesting to find that Egyptian words and expressions are used in the story of Joseph (Gen 37-50). Moses was highly educated in Egyptian language and arts. Beginning with Gen 37 the authors acquaintance with Egyptian customs and expressions is clear.^{vi} Every indication points to Moses being the author. All this is confirmed by Jesus Christ Himself who attributed the first five books to Moses.

Luke 24:27 Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

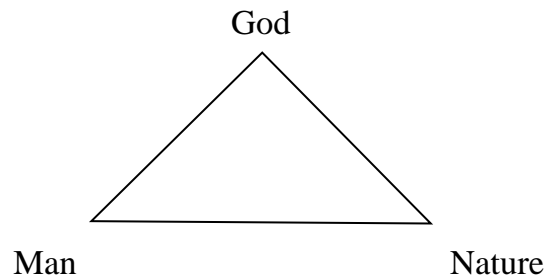
Luke 24:44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

Abraham from Sheol ascribed the books to Moses (Luke 16:29). Exodus is explicitly said to be “the book of Moses”.

Mark 12:26 "But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, and the God of Jacob'?"

Exactly when Moses compiled Gen 1-36 into one document and wrote Gen 37-Dt 33 (Joshua probably wrote Dt 34 which records Moses’ death) is difficult to ascertain. It may have been in stages or all at the close of his life on the plains of Moab (Dt 34:1). Most likely he wrote it in stages. Exodus was probably written at the base of Mt Sinai or during the wilderness wanderings but there is no doubt that Moses is the author. Because

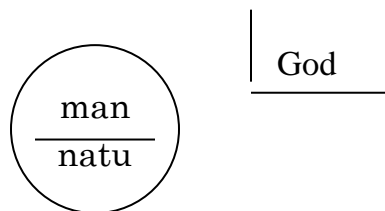
he authored the Torah he was highly revered among the Jews. The material contained in the Law is foundational to both the Old and New Testaments. It teaches us who God is, who man is, and what nature is as well as their relationships.



These are the three most basic categories of life. We are introduced to these relationships in the creation account of Genesis. God is the uncreated Creator. By language God created the universe in the span of six days of ~ 24 hours each as signified by the repetitive pattern “evening and morning, the Xth day”. In this account God creates three domains and then fills those domains (cf Exod 20:11; Rev 10:6).

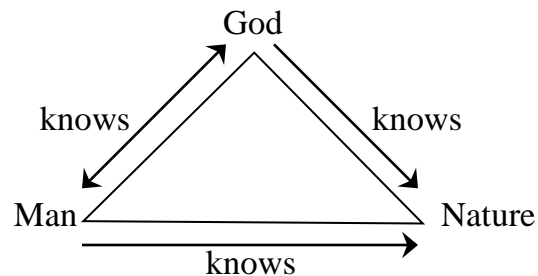
DOMAINS	FILLED
Day 1 Heavens	Day 4 Sun, Moon, Stars
Day 2 Sea	Day 5 Fish, Great Sea Monsters
Day 3 Land	Day 6 Cattle, Creeping Things, Beasts, Man

This is the work of an engineer. Engineers create domains and then fill those domains. Creation is a very precise and orderly event and it teaches us how we ought to work. Two primary distinctions are absolutely unique to Christianity. First, the distinction between God and man. Second, the distinction between man and nature. Let’s look at these distinctions because they are assumed in Exodus and the rest of the pages of Scripture.



God is distinct and separate from man and nature. God is not a man and God is not an extension of nature. Man is not nature. Man is not the product of nature (by evolution).

He is distinct from nature. The reason man is distinct is because God created man in His image. Because of this man alone has the unique capacity to know both God and nature.



Nature does not have a personal relationship with man or God. Only personal beings have personal relationship and the Bible insists that only God and men are personal beings (as well as angels). Thus, we have a relationship and responsibility to God and we have been given responsibility over nature.^{vii}

III. TITLE

The Hebrew name of the book follows the traditional Jewish method of naming the book after the first words. Thus, the Hebrew name is *we'ellesh shemot*, “now these are the names of” (Exod 1:1). When the Hebrew people returned from exile in Babylon the majority had lost use of the Hebrew language. As a result, the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek. Tradition says 72 men in separate cubicles made the translation resulting in the Septuagint (LXX). Although the titles are not inspired the translators gave this book the title ‘Exodus’ meaning “to go out” “to exit” “to depart” because the mass exodus of Israel from Egypt is the main event in the book. The word ‘Exodus’ comes from the Greek Translation of the Hebrew *yatsa*, which is found in Exodus 19:1.

Exodus 19:1 In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out [*yatsa*] of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.

This word has the same meaning in the NT.

Hebrews 11:22 By faith Joseph, when he was dying, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel, and gave orders concerning his bones.

IV. SCOPE

The events of the Book of Exodus pick up the story where Genesis left off (cf Exod 1:8 “Now...”) and span from the approximate years of 1875BC-1445BC. Thus, the events of the Book of Exodus cover a span of ~ 430 years in accordance with...

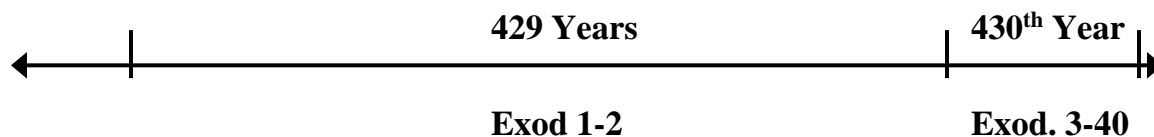
Exodus 12:40-41 Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.⁴¹ And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.^{viii}

According to the prophecy of Gen. 15:13, 400 of these 430 years the Israelites were under oppressive rule.

Genesis 15:13 God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years.

The oppression probably begins in 1:8. As long as the king knew Joseph there was no oppressive rule.

The first 429 years are summarized in the first two chapters. The remaining 38 chapters cover the 430th year which is of greatest importance because it involves Israel's deliverance from Egypt and their new relationship with God.



V. PURPOSE

Exodus has two basic purposes. The first purpose of Exodus is to trace the momentous deliverance of Israel from the oppressive satanic forces of Egypt (Exod 1:8-15:21). The Exodus is the single most significant theological and historical event in the entire OT. Only Ruth comes close to giving such a clear picture of redemption. One author said,

“Whereas Genesis is the book of beginnings, Exodus is the book of redemption.”^{ix}

This is the foundational event of Israel's entire history. They went into Egypt few in number and came out a mighty nation. Because of this Exodus is quoted more times in

the OT than any other book. It therefore serves as the type of all redemption and the Christian would do well to see in it a type of his own redemption (Eph 2:1-10). It shows how God extracts people from the oppression of the world system that is controlled by Satan (like poison from a wound).

The second purpose of Exodus is to show how God expects His people to live in light of the deliverance He provided. This begins at Mt Sinai when God reveals His will to the nation.

Thus, the two purposes of the book are “God’s deliverance from bondage” and “God’s revelation of how to live once delivered”. The two purposes may well be seen as pictures of justification and sanctification or as “relationship” and “fellowship”.

VI. MAJOR EVENTS

- The Exodus
- Mt. Sinai

VII. MAJOR DOCTRINES

The major doctrines associated with

- The Exodus Substitutionary Atonement
 Redemption
 Propitiation
 Reconciliation
- Mt. Sinai Revelation
 Inspiration & Inerrancy
 Canonicity

VIII. THEME

Two major themes of Exodus are

- “deliverance”
- “obedience”

God would deliver the nation from bondage through Moses. God would continue to “deliver” Israel from Her enemies if she obeyed His Law given at Mt. Sinai. Thus, “deliverance” seems to be the major theme and obedience through faith a second theme.

IX. TYPES IN EXODUS

- Pharaoh Satan
- Israel Sinners
- Moses Christ as Savior
- Moses Christ as Lawgiver
- Leaven Sin
- Lamb Substitute
- Hyssop Bitterness

X. FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY

The oppression and Exodus were prophesied in

Genesis 15:13-16 *God* said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. ¹⁴ "But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions.

The prophecy of verse 13 concerning the oppression began in Egypt in 1845BC and lasted until 1446BC, a period of 400 years. The prophecy of verse 14 concerning judgment of Egypt began and ended in 1446BC when God sent ten plagues. The latter part of verse 14 prophecies that Israel “will come out with many possessions”. This was fulfilled in

Exodus 12:35-36 Now the sons of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, for they had requested from the Egyptians articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing; ³⁶ and the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have their request. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.

Joseph trusted in the promises of God to the point that he asked his brothers to take his bones from Egypt to the Promised Land when the Exodus occurred.

Genesis 50:24 Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob." ²⁵ Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here."

In fulfillment of prophecy, Israel's Exodus from Egypt took place and Joseph's bones were taken up from Egypt back to the Promised Land of Israel (Gen. 50:25-56; Exod. 13:19; Josh.24:32; Heb. 11:22). This illustrates the precision of biblical prophecy and the fact that prophecy is fulfilled literally and not allegorically.

ⁱ Of course, we disagree over secular chronologies being built from ancient Astronomical Data, Radiocarbon Data, and Artifactual Data because the presuppositions underlying these methods is seriously flawed and unreliable (see Lesson 2: Dating the Exodus).

ⁱⁱ Also see Sirach Prolog 1:1 "Whereas many and great things have been delivered unto us by the law and the prophets, and by others that have followed their steps, for the which things Israel ought to be commended for learning and wisdom..."

ⁱⁱⁱ By this time the Hebrews recognized 22 books that had the same content as the 24. Josephus said, "We have but twenty-two [books] containing the history of all time" *Against Apion* 1.8. Apparently the number was reduced from 24 to 22 by combining Ruth with Judges and Lamentations with Jeremiah. The important point is that the content, whether contained in 39, 24, or 22 books is the same.

^{iv} Or sometimes "Moses and the Prophets" (Luke 16:29, 31; 24:47; Acts 26:22).

^v Divine inspiration is not contrary to human research or use of quotations from other documents. Luke admits the use of human research to compile his chronological account of Christ's birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension in the Gospel of Luke (cf Luke 1:1-4).

^{vi} Human style and expressions in Scripture do not undermine divine inspiration.

^{vii} The biblical view of man's relationship to nature is unique in that it only can provide the basis for scientific investigation. The basis of all scientific investigation is language. In the Genesis account God gives Adam his first vocabulary, "day", "night", "heaven", "earth", "sea", "land", et al and then God gives Adam the task of extending his vocabulary through personal investigation of the animals he saw. Adam discovered that none of these were like him—able to speak. His investigation and description of nature could only get started because God's knowledge existed before his own knowledge. Thus, only the Bible gives a sound basis for scientific investigation. Only after a biblical view of nature was adopted did modern systematic science develop. It is significant that many writers have recognized that science did not arise in the East because the oriental religions could not supply a base for objective knowledge. We will find in Exodus that the Egyptians embraced a mystical nature religion and as such could not compete with YHWH. While the Egyptians called on gods identified with nature, the Israelites called on the God who created nature and is therefore distinct from it. We can learn about God through nature and more specifically through God's self-revelation in Scripture. Every doctrine is related in some way to God, man and nature. The books of Moses are interested in explaining these relationships. That is, how ought we to live in the world in relation to God and nature? It is very practical instruction and the instruction comes through the history of mankind.

History is linear and pedagogical. That is, history is always moving forward and God's revelation begins at the start of time. History is also pedagogical. That is, God uses history as a teaching tool. Precept upon precept God builds towards history's center, Jesus Christ, and history's culmination, His earthly kingdom.

^{viii} Samaritan Pentateuch and LXX add that they sojourned in Canaan as well.

^{ix} Unger, Merrill F. *Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG, 2002), 101.

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