

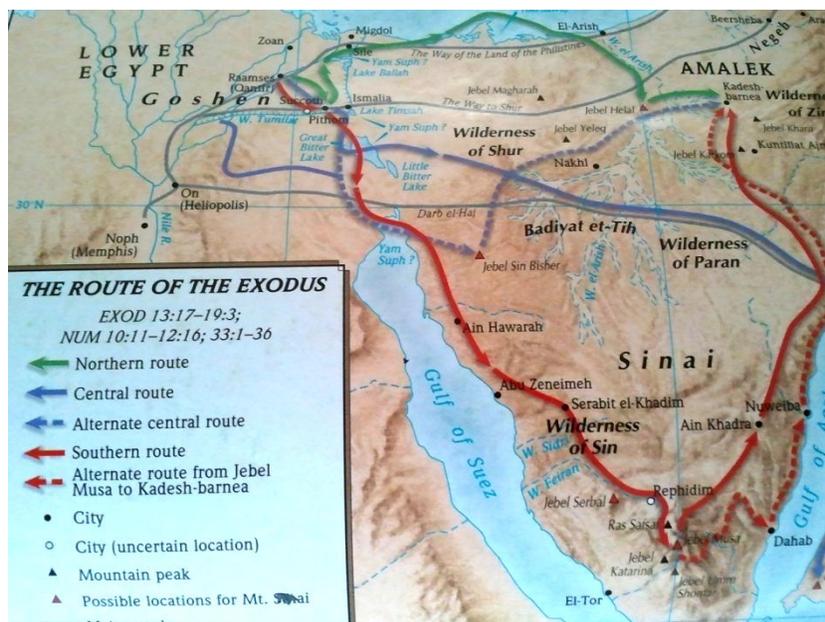
The Secret of Sinai

For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest...” (Hebrews 12:18)

MISTAKEN MAPS?

Mount Sinai is an enigma, yet is perhaps the most important earthly location of all time! It is where Moses received directly from God the Ten Commandments—a document for all people of all time written in stone by God Himself! Mt. Sinai is where Moses saw and communed with God, while at the base of the mountain the people of God committed immorality and idolatry. Events surrounding this mountain and the exodus of Israel from Egypt are extremely important, as they involve mighty miracles such as the ten plagues in Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea.

While some Bible maps indicate a question as to the true location of Mt. Sinai, some do not. In fact, scholars often do a great disservice to the Word of God by indicating alternate routes of the crossing of the Red Sea in places that are totally contradictory to Scripture! (See examples below.)



Check your Bible map. Each map of the greater Red Sea / Sinai Peninsula area is similar to the ones above, with little or no allowance for the possibility that the children of Israel exited Egypt north of the Gulf of Suez

and crossed the entire Sinai Peninsula. In this scenario, they would have crossed the Red Sea somewhere on the Gulf of Aqaba (possibly at Nuweiba) to get to Mt. Sinai, which according to Galatians 4:25 is in Arabia. Instead of taking the Bible at face value, scholars undermine the Biblical account with “alternate routes” that contradict the Bible with paths that go through a lake, a river, or even through swampy area! One route we saw *never* showed the Israelites crossing the Sea!

QUESTION: What body of water did they cross to get into the Promised Land? They had to cross the *Jordan River*. If they wandered in the Sinai Peninsula after supposedly crossing a “Reed Sea,” lake, or river north of the Gulf of Suez (as maps often indicate), they would not have needed to cross the River Jordan to get into the Promised Land. However, if they crossed the Gulf of Aqaba, this would place Mt. Sinai in what is present-day Saudi Arabia (Galatians 4:25). Hence, they wandered in the wilderness east of Aqaba and had to cross the Jordan River to get into the Promised Land.

The beach at Nuweiba (referenced earlier) is one possible crossing site since the terrain (see Google Earth) fits the narrative. A narrow passageway through mountainous territory opens up at this huge beach and would fit the Biblical account. The Bible tells us that God led His people with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

QUESTION: Have you wondered why the Egyptians could not just go around the pillar to get to the Israelites? If God was *behind* Israel at the end of the narrow passageway, the Egyptians would not have been able to go around. Also, the narrow passageway is at end of a curvy road through the mountains. This is consistent with the narrative, since God told Moses that Pharaoh would think they were “entangled” in the land:

For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They *are* **entangled in the land**, the wilderness hath shut them in. (Exodus 14:3)

A MAIN OBJECTION

An objection to this idea (that the Israelites crossed the entire Sinai Peninsula before arriving at the Red Sea) is that such a large group of people could not have traveled that far within such a short amount of time (about a week). While this is a good objection, it does not stand up to logic and reasoning.

First, God led the people by night.

Moreover thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and **in the night** by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go. (Nehemiah 9:12)

This allowed the people to go longer distance than others (such as the Egyptians) who doubtless had to set up camp at night.

Second, the people “spoiled the Egyptians” (Exodus 12:36) and were able to take what they desired for the journey.

QUESTION: What could they have taken from Egypt that would show the highly-advanced technology of the time, items which would have assisted their travel in the wilderness? We do not know, but it makes sense that they would have availed themselves of anything in Egypt that could have helped them on their journey. It is doubtless they obtained much gold from Egypt which Aaron later used to make an idol (Exodus 32:4).

A MIGHTY MOUNTAIN

Using the above description to assume that the Israelites wandered in what is present-day Saudi Arabia, pictures and reports of a blackened mountain in that general area are highly intriguing! In addition, there is a massive split rock and other interesting phenomena that must be considered. While we cannot advocate all of the views of these resources, two in particular stand out:

<http://www.wyattmuseum.com/red-sea-crossing.htm>

http://www.baseinstitute.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=72&Itemid=94

While we do not know *for sure* that Mt. Sinai is located in present-day Saudi Arabia, photos and video documentation are intriguing evidence—“pieces of a puzzle” that seem to confirm Galatians 4:25. One can even go to Google Earth and see a “black dot” in this general area, possibly the actual mountain that burned with fire!

<http://www.google.com/earth/index.html>

For balance on this subject, this article claims to debunk the idea that Mt. Sinai is in present-day Saudi Arabia:

<http://www.ldolphin.org/sinai.html>

While pictures and video are important and intriguing, Scripture is *most* important:

1. The mountain burned with fire. (Deuteronomy 9:15; Hebrews 12:18)
2. The Israelites crossed through great waters of a sea. (Exodus 14:22-23; Nehemiah 9:11; Psalm 106:9)
3. The children of Israel traveled by day and night. (Nehemiah 9:12)
4. Pharaoh thought the Israelites would be entangled in the land. (Exodus 14:3)
5. Pharaoh’s army pursued the Israelites and was drowned in the Red Sea. (Exodus 14:9, 28; Psalm 136:15)
6. Mt. Sinai is “in Arabia.” (Galatians 4:25)

As one considers the Biblical account and the physical evidences, they seem to indicate that Mt. Sinai is indeed in present-day Saudi Arabia. While evidences are extremely important, we must remember the message that God has invested in this mountain.

We read in Hebrews:

For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which *voice* they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) (Hebrews 12:18-21)

Mount Sinai was a place of fear, death, and darkness. It represents the law of God and how it instills fear in our hearts if we disobey it. The people could not endure the sights and sounds, and neither can we endure the law of God. If we disobey Him, we will die. His Word says,

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, ²³ To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, ²⁴ And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel. (Hebrews 12:22-24)

Since death comes to every person at some point, this proves the fact that all have sinned against God.

“For the wages of sin *is* **death**; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

Mt. Sinai represented a fearsome God Who was separate from His people, with one man representing the people to God. Yet even Moses was afraid at the sight of a quaking mountain on fire!

QUESTION: Must we rely *today* upon one man to represent us before God? No! We can come “boldly into His presence” (Hebrews 4:16)! How? Read on!

A MOUNTAIN OF MERCY

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, ²³ To the general assembly and church of the

firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,²⁴ And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel. (Hebrews 12:22-24)

Mount Sion (Zion) represents the New Covenant, under which we enjoy many blessings:

1. the heavenly Jerusalem
2. innumerable angels
3. the church
4. God as “Judge of all”
5. Jesus our Mediator
6. a new covenant
7. perfected spirits
8. the blood of sprinkling

Jesus, Who gave His life blood in sacrificial atonement for our sins, offers to each of us this choice of mountains.

QUESTION: Have *you* come to Mt. Sion? Do *you* know that you are a part of the family of God, made up of “just men made perfect”? Have you placed your faith in Jesus as your Mediator before a holy Creator Who will judge us for all of our unrighteousness? If you have not yet come to Mt. Sion, you can do so today! The same Creator who was on Mt. Sinai is the same holy God today. But ***He came down*** from the mountain, walked among men, and gave His life a “ransom for many” so that we may boldly and without fear come directly into His presence!