

Exodus 17

Verse 1

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink.

Their next two stops after leaving the Desert of Sin were Dophkah and Alush however those stops are not mentioned here.

See Numbers 33:12 – 14

¹² They journeyed from the wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah. ¹³ They journeyed from Dophkah and camped at Alush. ¹⁴ And they journeyed from Alush and camped at Rephidim; now it was there that the people had no water to drink.

Rephidim means resting place.

See map 1705



Verses 2 - 3

² Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water that we may drink.” And Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?” ³ But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, “Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?”

² Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water that we may drink.” And Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?”

This is the second time that the lack of water had become an issue. The first time was at Marah in Exodus 15.

God was leading them with the pillar of cloud and He decided where they would rest. So if God is making all the decisions why were they quarreling with Moses? They should have seen this as another test and asked Moses for water rather than demanding it.

³ But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, “Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?”

Water is essential for life and even more so in a desert but to accuse Moses of bringing them out of Egypt to kill them is a bit over the top. This was another example of their exaggeration.

Verses 4 - 6

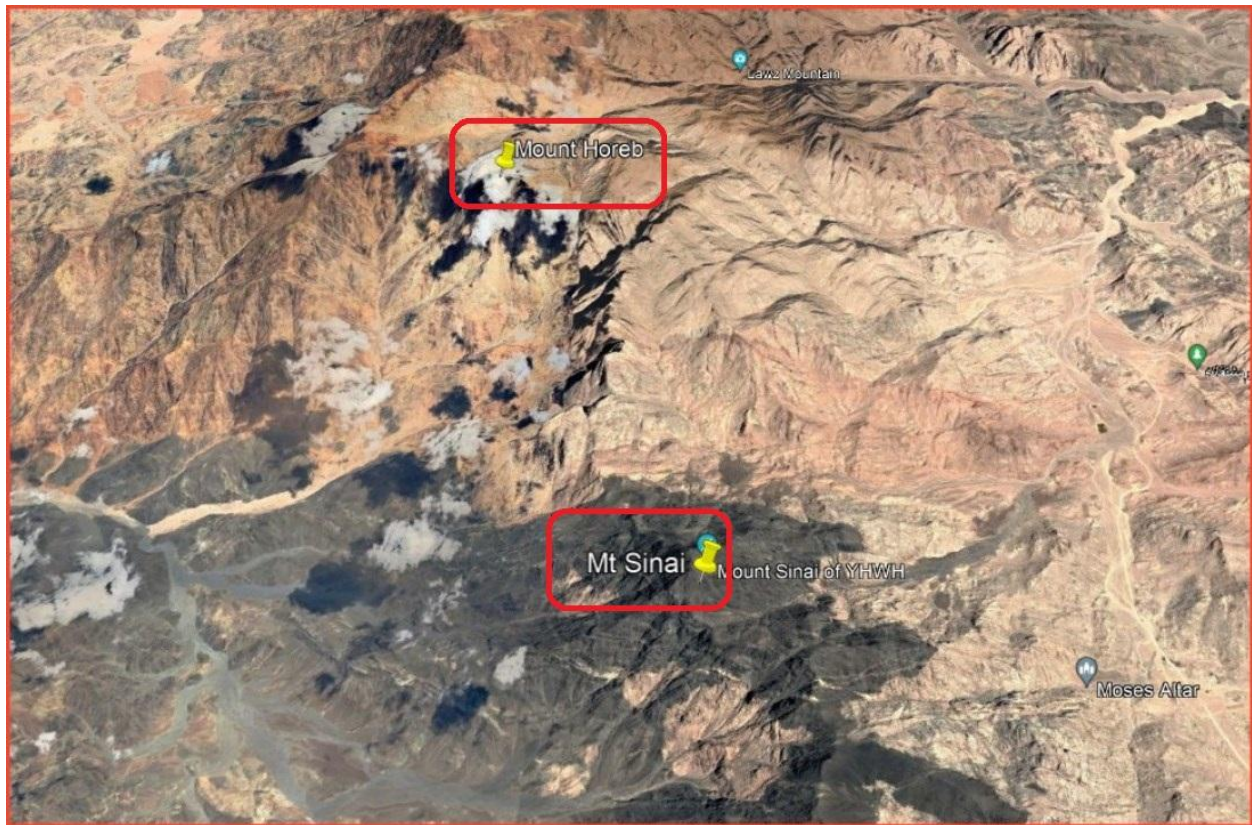
So Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, “What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me.” ⁵ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before you thereon the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

⁵ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go.

God wanted the people to see that the elders had a role in meeting their needs. This way the people would learn that they could go to the elders to be heard and this would shift some of the burden from Moses onto the elders.

⁶ Behold, I will stand before you thereon the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

See Pic 1710 Mount Horeb & Mount Sinai

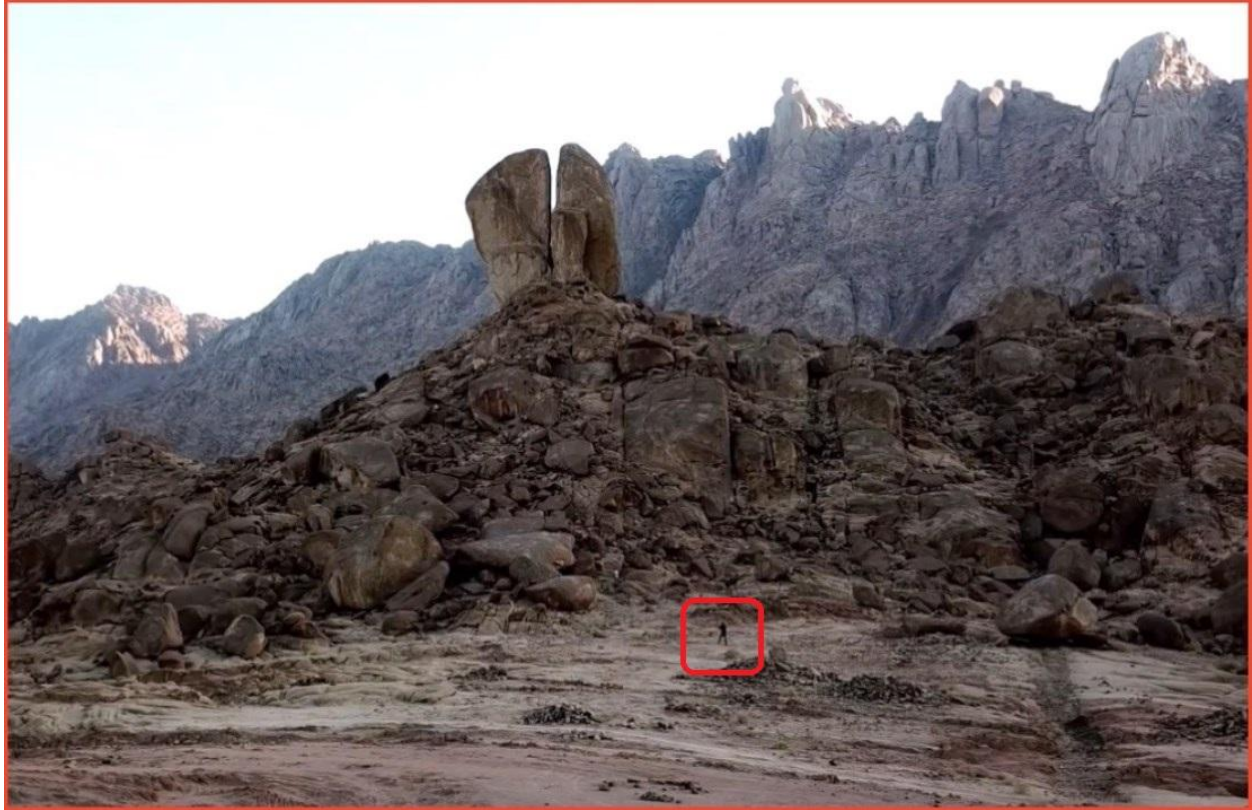


Horeb and Sinai are used interchangeably in scripture because they are within the same mountain range but they are separate peaks about 4 to 5 miles apart.

We know this is true because God will shortly lead the people from Rephidim where the rock at Horeb was located to Mount Sinai where the law will be given.

⁶ Behold, I will stand before you thereon the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

See pic 1715



This rock is believed to be the one referred to in this passage. Notice the size of this rock by comparing it to the man at the bottom of the hill.

See Video 1720 The rock at Rephidim

<http://www.levickfamily.com/8.14.html>

Previously, we talked about how events in the Old Testament were a physical representation of a spiritual reality in the New Testament

The 1st one was in chapter 12.....the blood of the lamb

The 2nd one was in chapter 16.....the bread of life

The 3rd one is here in Exodus 17:6.....the water of life

Here in Exodus 17:6 God gives the people water from a rock so they can drink, but in the New Testament God gave us Christ, the one who gives us a fountain of spiritual water.

See John 4:13 - 14

¹³ **Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again; ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never be thirsty; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up to eternal life.”**

The physical comes first and then the spiritual.

See 1 Cor. 15:44 - 46

⁴⁴ **it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual *body*. ⁴⁵ So also it is written: “The first man, Adam, became a living person.” The last Adam was a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual.**

Verse 7

He named the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested the Lord, saying, “Is the Lord among us, or not?”

Massah means to test or prove. Meribah means quarreling or dissension.

Verses 8 - 10

⁸ Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim. ⁹ So Moses said to Joshua, “Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.” ¹⁰ Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

⁸ Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim.

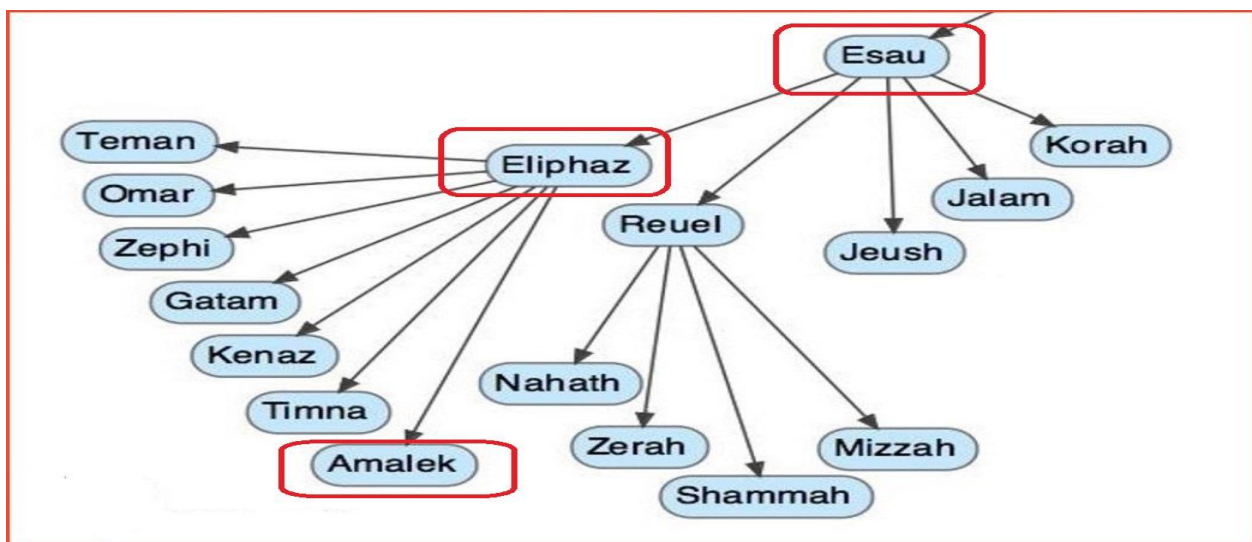
Israel had just crossed over into Arabia at the Red Sea crossing and the Amalekites in that area attacked them. See Map 1725 below.



There were Amalekites in southern Canaan and near Midian in Arabia. It was the Amalekites near Midian that attacked Israel.

Amalek was the son of Eliphaz and the grandson of Esau

See pic 1730



See Genesis 36:12

¹² **Timna was a concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz, and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These are the sons of Esau's wife Adah.**

The Amalekites were a kindred race to Israel but instead of showing some pity, they attacked the weak and weary.

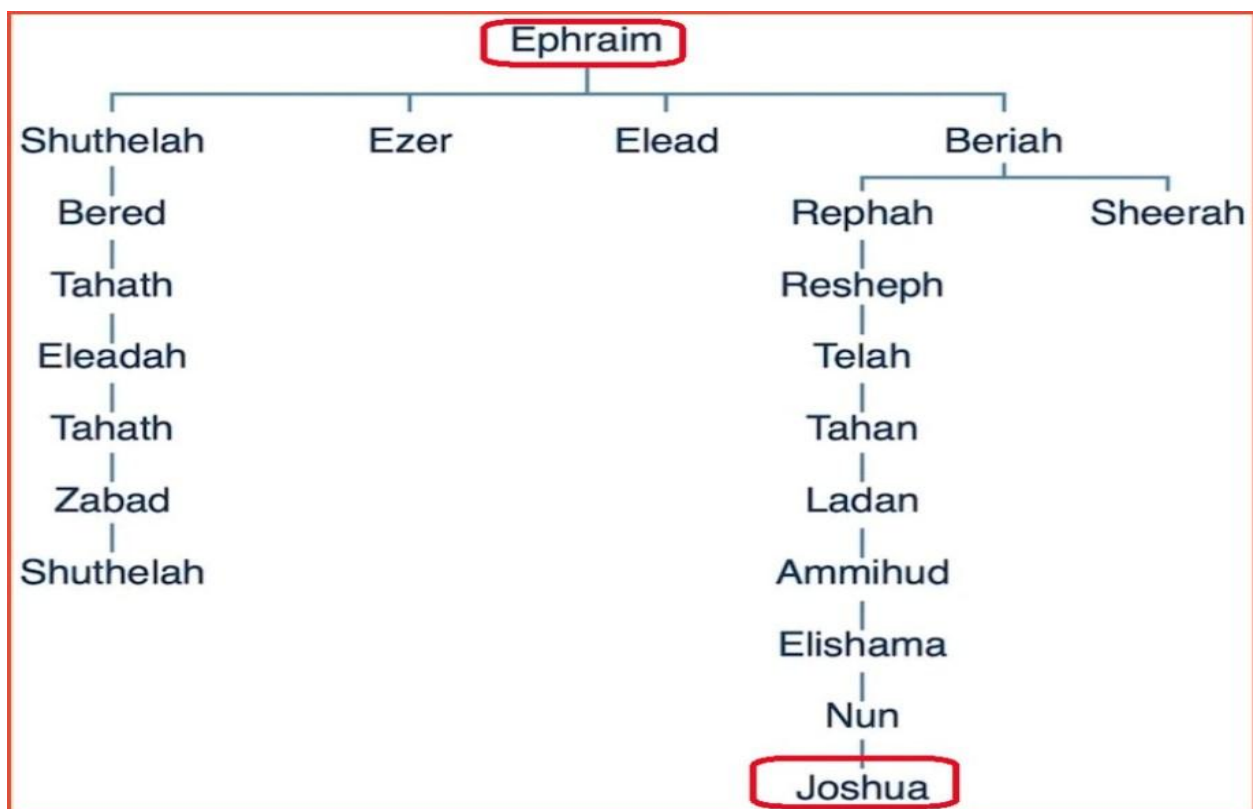
See Deuteronomy 25:17-18

¹⁷ **“Remember what Amalek did to you on the way when you came out of Egypt,**
¹⁸ **how he confronted you on the way and attacked among you all the stragglers at your rear when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God.**

⁹ **So Moses said to Joshua, “Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.”**

Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim. He was the son of Nun, "and the tenth generation from Ephraim.

See Chart 1735



See 1 Chronicles 7:23-27

²³ Then he went in to his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to a son, and he named him Beriah, because misfortune had come upon his house. ²⁴ His daughter was Sheerah, who built lower and upper Beth-horon, as well as Uzzen-sheerah. ²⁵ Rephah was his son *along* with Resheph, Telah his son, Tahan his son, ²⁶ Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, ²⁷ Nun his son, and Joshua his son.

This is the first appearance of Joshua in the biblical narrative. Joshua was an unusual character because he did **not** have a father. He was the son of Nun. ☺ ☺

Come on.....Didn't that bring a smile for at least a second.

¹⁰ Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

See pic 1740



Josephus states that Hur was the husband of Miriam. If that is true, it was a family gathering on the top of the hill.

We do know that Hur was the grandfather of Bezaleel, the craftsman of the tabernacle.

See Exodus 31:2 – 5

Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²“See, I have called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. ³ And I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all *kinds of* craftsmanship, ⁴ to create artistic designs for work in gold, in silver, and in bronze, ⁵ and in the cutting of stones for settings, and in the carving of wood, so that he may work in all *kinds of* craftsmanship.

Verses 11 - 12

¹¹ So it came about when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed. ¹² But Moses’ hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set.

Moses had told Joshua that he would station himself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in his hand.

But holding the staff up all day would be impossible so Aaron and Hur found a stone for Moses to sit on and each of them supported one of his hands. The staff had a definite effect, both good and bad, on the progress of the fight.

Verses 13 - 16

¹³ So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

¹⁴ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.”

¹⁵ Moses built an altar and named it The Lord is My Banner; ¹⁶ and he said, “The Lord has sworn; the Lord will have war against Amalek from generation to generation.”

¹³ So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Did the slaves bring swords with them from Egypt? Would the Egyptian slave masters have allowed the slaves to have swords?

It is possible they bought some swords from the people of Midian since they were close to them during their travels from Marah to Rephidim. Moses had spent 40 years there and was related to Jethro who was the tribal leader.

We know they had camped at six places so far, Marah, Elim, The Wilderness of Sin, Dophkah, Alush and Rephidim. Were any of these places occupied or were they simply uninhabited places that were suitable to rest at? We know they had the gold and silver to pay for the swords but we have no record of any interaction with any people from these places

It's fun to speculate on matters like this but we should always remember it is only speculation.

¹⁴ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.”

There is some debate as to whether this should be translated a book or the book. Some scholars believe that Moses had already started writing the Pentateuch while others argue that Moses didn't write the Pentateuch until the end of the wilderness wanderings 40 years later.

However, there is another possibility that is also likely. This battle may have been written down in a book that only recorded this event and then this account was also added to the Pentateuch when Moses wrote it.

¹⁵ Moses built an altar and named it The Lord is My Banner; ¹⁶ and he said, “The Lord has sworn; the Lord will have war against Amalek from generation to generation.”

There is some debate over the actual name of this altar. Most Modern translations render it, The Lord is my banner. The Septuagint rendered it, The Lord is My Refuge and Josephus translated it, The Lord the Conqueror.

In verse 14 the Lord says, **“I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.”** This sounds quite definitive, but Moses gives an explanation of what God meant by this in verse 16 where God says **“the Lord will have war against Amalek from generation to generation.”** This will not be one battle where the Amalekites are totally wiped out, but rather it will be a series of judgments that will take place over time.