

Exodus 3

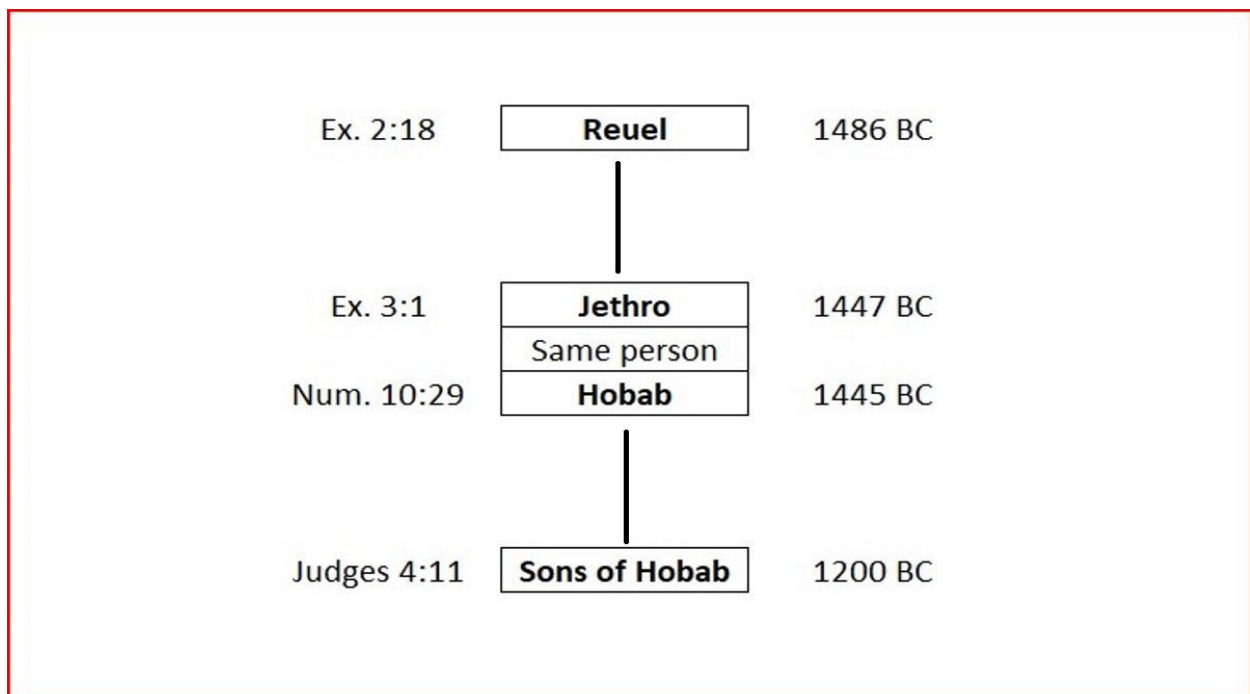
Verse 1

Now Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

In Exodus 2:18 Reuel was the priest of Midian, and the father-in-law of Moses. Forty years later, Jethro is the priest of Midian and father-in-law of Moses. Most likely Reuel had passed away and his son Jethro took over as the tribal leader. But why does the text say Jethro is Moses' father-in-law?

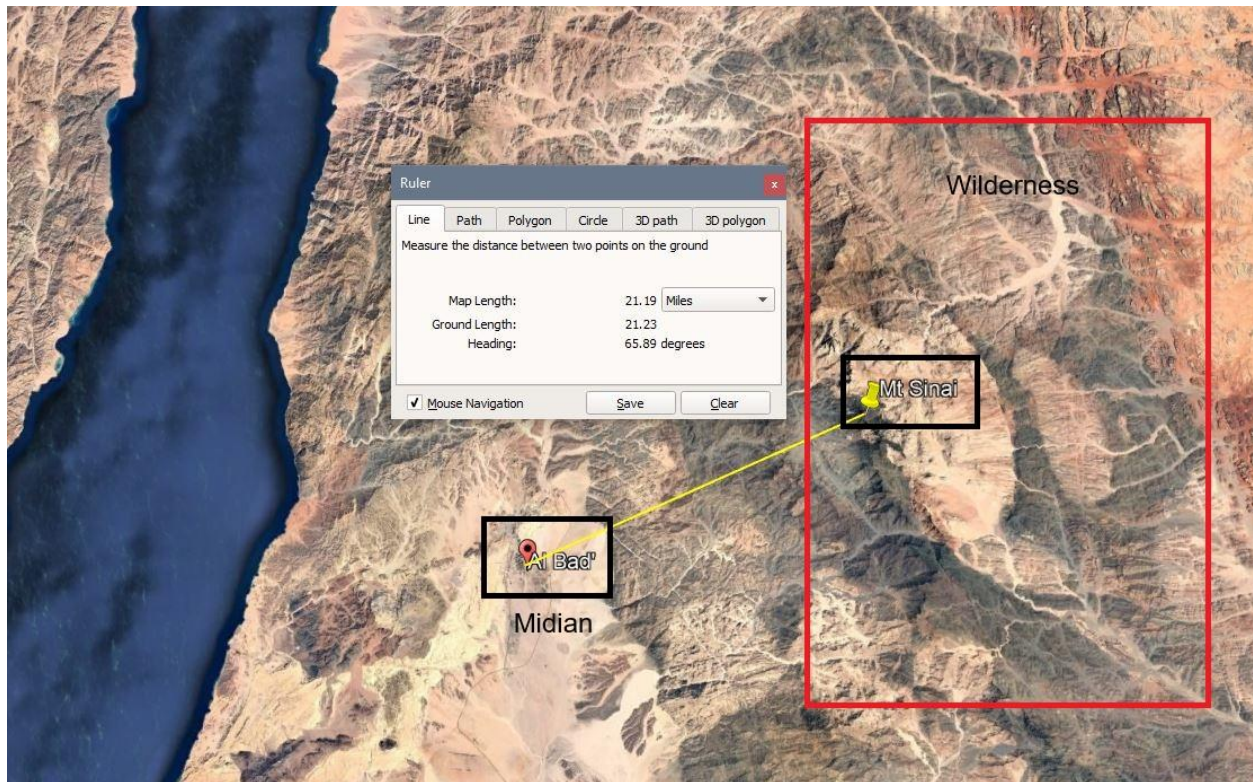
The term used for Father-in-Law in the Hebrew vernacular had a wider meaning to it than it does in our English terminology. Much like the term for son in the Hebrew was sometimes used to designate a son, grandson and even great grandson.

See chart 305



The text says that “he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God”. The west side of the wilderness was east of Midian.

See map 310



So Moses left Midian and went to the west side of the wilderness and came to Sinai.

If Mount Sinai was in the Sinai Peninsula as many people have believed for many years then Moses would have had to take the flock on a 500 mile round trip to get to Sinai.

See video 315 8.15 Midian to Sinai

<https://www.levickfamily.com/8.15.html>

Verses 2 - 3

² The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. **³ So Moses said, "I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up."**

The Angel of the Lord is not a created angel, but God himself. Many scholars agree that this is a reference to the reincarnate Christ.

The burning bush was an actual event not a vision. Moses knew this was not a natural phenomenon so he turned aside to investigate it.

Verses 4 - 6

When the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” ⁵ Then He said, “Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶ He said also, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

When the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.”

This confirms that this angel of the Lord was God and not an angel.

⁶ He said also, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

God informs Moses that He is the God of his father Amram and the God of the 3 patriarchs. The covenant that God made with Abraham was now 430 years old and spanned 7 generations from Abraham to Moses.

Jesus quotes this verse in Matthew 22.32

See Matthew 22:29 - 33

²⁹ But Jesus answered and said to them, “You are mistaken, since you do not understand the Scriptures nor the power of God. ³⁰ For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ³¹ But regarding the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God: ³² ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” ³³ When the crowds heard *this*, they were astonished at His teaching.

Jesus made the argument for immortality on the tense of a single verb....**“I AM”**

Jesus said there is a resurrection and that the departed saints are not dead, because God is the God of the living.

He also said that we will be like the angels in heaven.

Verses 7- 8

The Lord said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. ⁸ So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.

The Lord said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings.

Notice what God says about slavery in verse 7

- 1. I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt**
- 2. And have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters**
- 3. For I am aware of their sufferings**

The Hebrews had been in slavery for 160 years. That would be a long time to suffer at the hands of unfair taskmasters and we should never minimize the injustice and suffering that these people had to face.

Mankind often struggles with why God allowed slavery and/or suffering to continue for so many years but we know God gives individuals and nations time to repent of their sin.

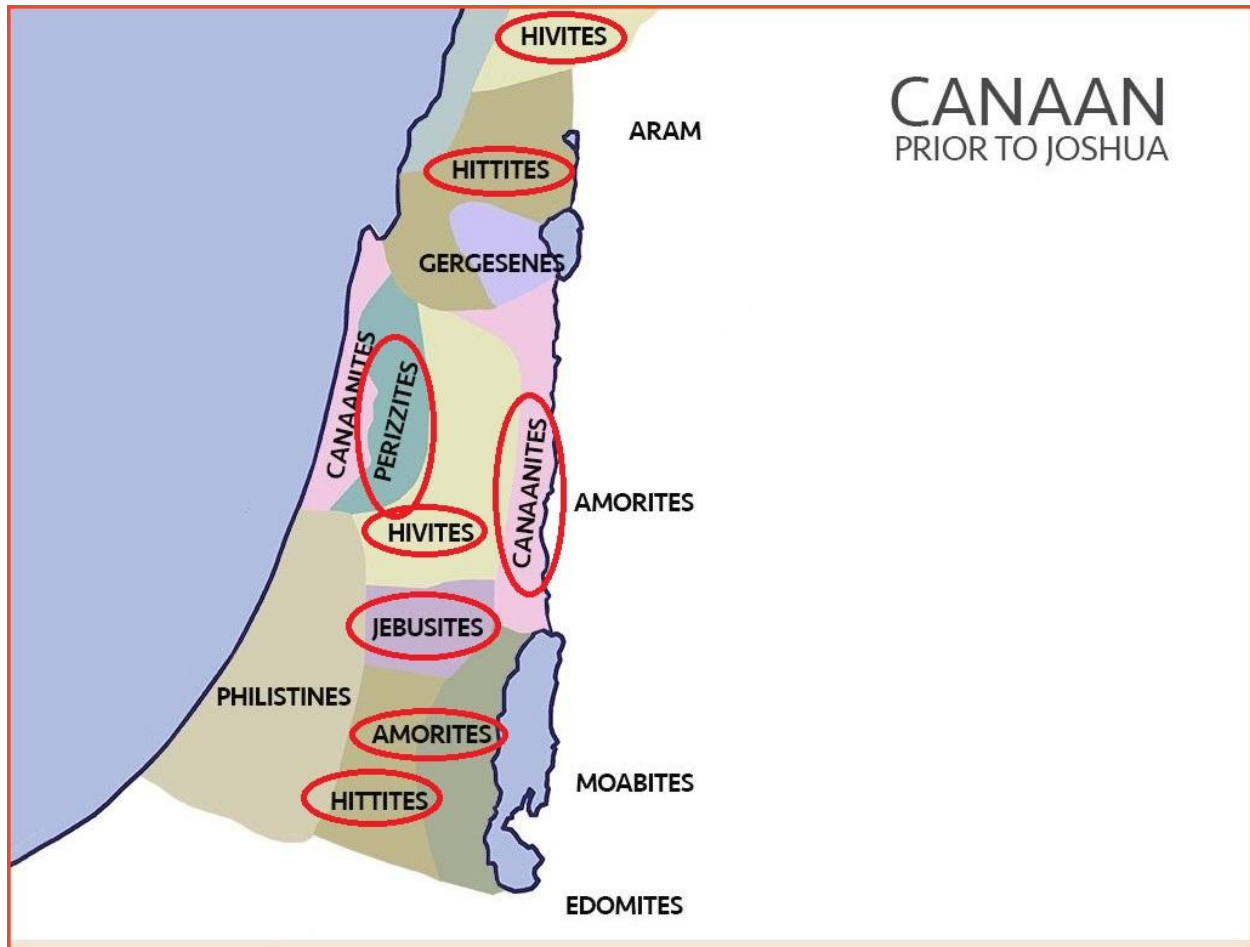
See 2 Peter 3:9

⁹ The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not willing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance.

Those who say God never condemned slavery are seriously mistaken.

⁸ So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.

See Map 320



In other places the word Canaanite applies to all of the 7 nations as a group but here it is one of the 7 nations of the land. It may be that the Canaanites were the dominate group among the 7 nations.

All of them were settled in Canaan centuries before Israel. Using secular dates the 7 nations appeared between 2300 BC to 1800 BC. Although it should be noted that secular dates have been changing, getting shorter and shorter, for events during this time period.

Verses 9 -11

Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰ Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.” ¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?”

⁹ Now, behold, the cry of the sons of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them.

Any fair minded person can see that God was judging Egypt for their slavery.

¹⁰ Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.”

40 years ago Moses took it upon himself to deliver justice for an Israelite that was being mistreated but this time it was a commission from God.

¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?”

This is the first of 4 objections that Moses will use to avoid doing God’s will.

1. Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh

Moses uses the pronoun “I” three times in this sentence. It’s true that he would be seen as the leader of this movement but God would be doing all the heavy lifting.

Verses 12 - 15

And He said, “Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain.” ¹³ Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?”

¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ God, furthermore, said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.

And He said, “Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain.”

The answer to Moses first objection was that He (God) would be with him.

Then God gave Moses a sign that will verify it is HE who sent him. However, this sign would not be revealed until Israel was out of Egypt. The sign that God gave to Moses was that Israel would worship God at the same mountain that Moses is currently standing on – Mount Horeb also known as Mount Sinai.

This sign came true at the beginning of the 4th month after leaving Egypt. So Moses had to accept this sign based on faith because it would not take place until Israel was already out of Egypt.

¹³ Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?’”

The second objection that Moses presents to God was the following.

2. What do I say if the people ask “what is God’s name”?

There were two reasons that the sons of Jacob might ask about God’s name?

1. If God had in fact talked to Moses and told him to do this mission then Moses must know God in a personal way and therefore Moses should know His Name.
2. It is possible that they didn’t know which name to use for God.

God had often said he was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But that is not a name, it is a sign that the same God had worked in the lives of these 3 men. Plus God had been known by a number of different names in the Book of Genesis. We know they didn’t have the book of Genesis yet but these stories had been passed down orally thru the years and the people had heard about these different names for God.

However, if they didn’t know which name to use when speaking to the Lord how could they be sure Moses was telling them the truth (the correct one)?

The answer to Moses 2nd objection was the following:

¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ God, furthermore, said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.”

According to these two verses God has two names.

1. **I AM**

2. **THE LORD**

But God also explains why He is known by two names.

1. His eternal name in heaven is **I AM**

2. His name among mankind here on earth is **The Lord** [Yahweh].

We know this because in the last sentence of verse 15 He says, this is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.

Verses 16 -18

¹⁶ **Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, “I am indeed concerned about you and what has been done to you in Egypt. ¹⁷ So I said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, to a land flowing with milk and honey.”’ ¹⁸ They will pay heed to what you say; and you with the elders of Israel will come to the king of Egypt and you will say to him, ‘The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. So now, please, let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.’**

¹⁶ **Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, “I am indeed concerned about you and what has been done to you in Egypt.**

God wants Moses to give the elders a very simple message

1. I am indeed concerned about you and what has been done to you in Egypt

2. I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to a land flowing with milk and honey

¹⁸ They will pay heed to what you say; and you with the elders of Israel will come to the king of Egypt and you will say to him, ‘The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. So now, please, let us go a three days’ journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.’

If Moses will give the elders the message outlined above, God guarantees that they will believe Moses’ report and the elders will accompany Moses when he comes to the king. However, in the next chapter Moses will ask for some additional help in convincing the elders that they should believe him.

Moses and the elders were supposed to approach the king with a humble attitude (please let us go). Nevertheless, this was a big ask. There were about 2.5 million Hebrew slaves and this group would be gone for at least a week. It was a three day journey into the wilderness and another 3 days to come back, not to mention how long it might take to sacrifice to the Lord.

Verses 19 - 22

¹⁹ But I know that the king of Egypt will not permit you to go, except under compulsion. ²⁰ So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My miracles which I shall do in the midst of it; and after that he will let you go. ²¹ I will grant this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be that when you go, you will not go empty-handed. ²² But every woman shall ask of her neighbor and the woman who lives in her house, articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing; and you will put them on your sons and daughters. Thus you will plunder the Egyptians.”

¹⁹ But I know that the king of Egypt will not permit you to go, except under compulsion.

God is giving Moses advance warning that the king will say no, and that it will take a show of force before he will change his mind.

²⁰ So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My miracles which I shall do in the midst of it; and after that he will let you go.

God was being frank with Moses that this would take some time (all My miracles) but in the end the King would let him go.

²¹ I will grant this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be that when you go, you will not go empty-handed.

The Hebrews did receive shelter, food, and clothing but they had been underpaid for 160 years. So it was only fair that the Egyptians should give them some back pay.

This was also a fulfillment of a prophecy

Genesis 15:13 – 14

¹³ Then 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 for four hundred years. ¹⁴ But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions.”