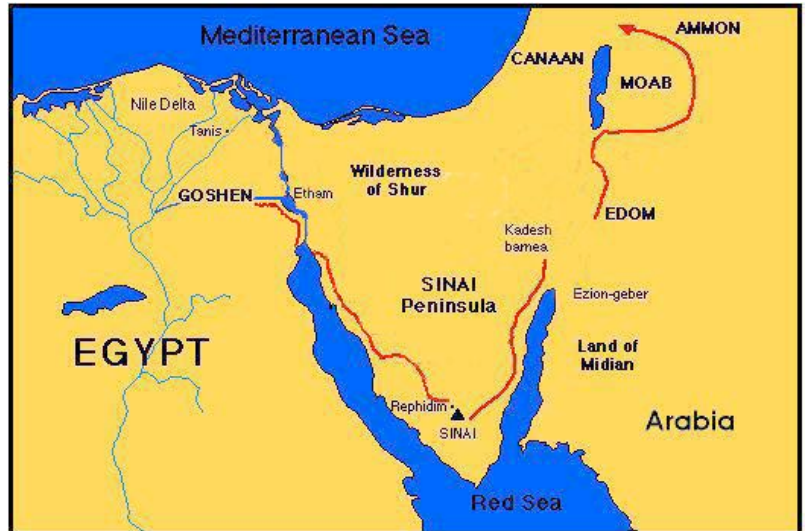


The Real Mt. Sinai  
What can we know?

Where is Mt. Sinai? Everyone knows the answer to that. Just look at any map in the Bible or in an encyclopedia of the Bible. They will all show you exactly where Mt. Sinai is. Here, I will show you.

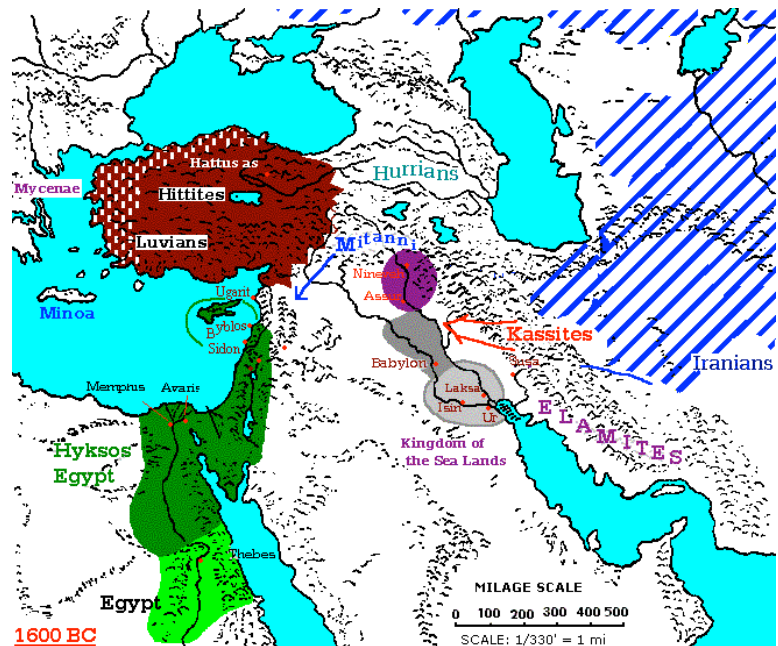
This is the map that will most likely show up, but where did they come up with this information? Many times we will assume something is correct because someone took time to make a nice drawing for us, and surely it must have been "authorized" by someone in order for it to find its way into our Holy Bible and into Bible encyclopedias.



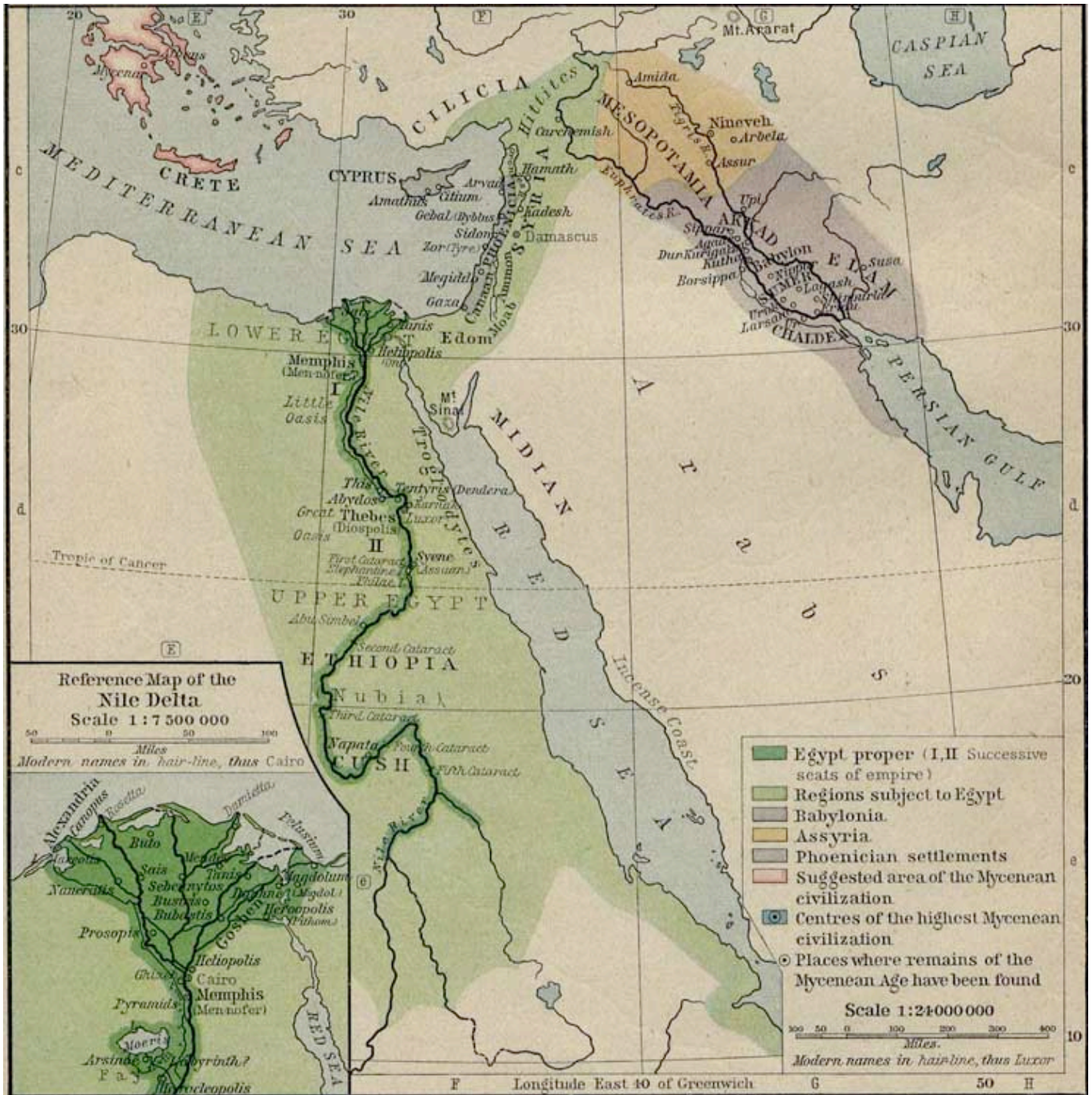
Shame on us for never taking the time to look for information on our own. Shame on us for blindly believing whatever we are told. Shame on us for doubting that we have the ability to learn some things for ourselves.

Let's remedy that right now! There is more information in the Bible and historical documentation to prove that this map is not right than information to collaborate it. Let's do some digging on our own, and then I will present some information for your consideration. Are you ready for an adventure?

Let's start with some back ground. We are going to begin by looking at some ancient maps that show the lands of Egypt. We want to see what territory they controlled back in 1500-1400 BC, the years the exodus would have taken place. Take a look not only at what area belonged to Egypt, but also where other nations were located as well. The dark green would be lower Egypt and the light green would be upper Egypt. Also, note the date on the bottom. These were their lands in 1600 BC.



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This map shows Egypt's power in the 1500's BC but you will notice other kingdoms beginning to move into the area toward the northeast, such as Edom, Moab, and Ammon.

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The Sinai peninsula always was part of Egypt's territory. They had mines in that area.



This is important to note when we begin reading and reasoning through the Scriptures.

1. Let's start by reading Exodus 2:15 and 3:1 and answer the following questions.
  - a. Where did Moses go to escape from Pharaoh?
  - b. Where was he pasturing his father-in-law's flocks?
  - c. Where did Moses come according to 3:1?
  - d. What was this mountain called?

2. God was going to send Moses to Egypt to bring the people out of bondage in Egypt to the land flowing with milk and honey (Canaan - the Promised Land). Read Exodus 3:12.
  - a. Before they went to the land flowing with milk and honey, where did God want Moses to bring the people?
  - b. What were they supposed to do there?
3. When they came out of Egypt, what did they bring with them? Read Exodus 3:20-22 to answer that question. Also read Genesis 15:13-14 and see what God had promised to Abraham around 500 years earlier.
4. Now that they left Egypt, we want to list everything they encountered along the way. Read these passages and list places they came to, events that happened there, and problems they faced. If you need more room, use a separate piece of paper.
  - a. Exodus 13:17-22 -
  - b. Exodus 14 -
  - c. Exodus 15:22-27 -
  - d. Exodus 16 -
  - e. Exodus 17 -

5. Once they were at the mountain, they were there for quite a long time. Find out exactly how long.
  - a. Read Exodus 19:1-2 to find out when they came to the base of the mountain. -
  
  - b. Read Numbers 10:11-13. When did they leave the mountain wilderness? This date was from the time they left Egypt.
  
  - c. How long were they camped at the base of the mountain? If there were two and a half million people (or more) camped in an area for that long, do you think there may be evidence of that?
  
6. Record the events that happened while they were camped at the base of the mountain.
  - a. Exodus 19:1-6, 12, 18-25 -
  
  - b. Exodus 20:24-26 -
  
  - c. Exodus 24:3-4, 9-18 -
  
  - d. Exodus 31:18 -
  
  - e. Exodus 32 -
  
  - f. Exodus 33:17-23 -

7. There is one last passage that I want to bring up for your own study concerning the location of this mountain. Let's take a look at what Paul says in Galatians 4:25. Where does he say this mountain is located?
8. To end this lesson, I want to leave you with a portion of an article that I found on the internet. It is found on a site called "Bible Archeology - Digging up Bible Stories" by Steve Rudd. As we read articles like this, we need to remember that it is not the infallible Word of God. Man can make mistakes, sometimes intentionally misleading people, others being misled themselves. We need to look at the material given and evaluate it in light of what God's Word says. If nothing else, it should help us to look at the locations and events surrounding this event from a new perspective. Happy reading!

## **Introduction:**

1. We can prove from the Bible that Mt. Sinai is in Arabia, not the wilderness of Egypt (Sinai Peninsula).
2. We propose Jebel al-Lawz (Mt. Lawz) as Mt. Sinai. At 2,580 metres, Lawz is the tallest mountain in northern Arabia.
3. There are three reasons why we chose Mt. Lawz as Mt. Sinai. First, it is in Arabia. Second, Josephus said Mt. Sinai was the tallest mountain in the region. Third, there are a number of archeological features that may be connected with the Exodus.

## **A. Why Mt. Sinai is at Mt. Lawz:**

1. Since almost every geographer from 900 BC down to 1800 AD had no concept of the Gulf of Aqaba or the Sinai Peninsula, this forced the idea that they crossed the red sea at the northern tip of the Gulf of Suez.
2. In 1446 BC the Edomites, the Midianites and the Ishmaelites did not live in the Wilderness of Egypt (Sinai Peninsula). For those bent on defending Mt. Sinai at Mt. Musa they must create the myth that Edom, the Midianites or the Ishmaelites lived nearby at the time of Moses. At the time of the Exodus in 1446 BC, neither Edom, the Midianites or the Ishmaelites controlled or owned the Wilderness of Egypt (Sinai Peninsula). It was Egypt's land and they controlled it.
3. In 54 AD, when Apostle Paul wrote Gal 4:25, the wilderness of Egypt (Sinai Peninsula) was never called Arabia. In 50 AD, the Nabataeans never referred to the Wilderness of Egypt as "Arabia" and it was not until the Roman's annexed the Wilderness of Egypt from the Egyptians in 106 AD that it was first called "Arabia".
4. Apostle Paul taught that Mt. Sinai was located in Arabia in Gal 4:25, where Ishmael lived.

5. Egyptian controlled mining in the Wilderness of Egypt (Sinai Peninsula) at the time of the Exodus: Copper mines include those at Timna and Serabit el-Khadim in the Sinai. The traditional exodus route to Mt. Musa, takes Israel right past the copper mine Serabit el-Khadim that was active in 1446 BC:
6. When Moses saw the burning bush, it says that he wandered in the rear wilderness. The fact that no other reference is given means that the only logical conclusion is that it was the rear wilderness of Midian. The Bible says that Moses went to the "behind side [Hebrew: "achar"] of the wilderness" Literally: achar "the hind or following part" (NASB Hebrew dictionary). So the east side of the Lawz would most certainly be described at the "behind wilderness". It is kind of like saying that Moses went to "the back forty".

## **B. Ancient record of Mt. Sinai in Arabia:**

1. 225 BC Demetrius the Chronographer: Demetrius believed that Mt. Sinai was in Arabia. He lived and worked in Alexandria, which meant he had access to the largest library in the world. Demetrius located Mt. Sinai in the city of Madyan (al Bad) in northwestern Arabia. This information comes from Eusebius in his work: *Preparatio Evangelica* 9:29.1-3
2. Josephus said that Mt. Sinai was the largest Mountain in the region.
3. Since 325 AD Mt. Sinai is located at Mt. Musa in the wilderness of Egypt. It is important to know that wilderness of Egypt was never called the "Sinai" or the Sinai Peninsula" before 325 AD. Queen Helena, Constantine's mother, chose Mt. Musa in a dream. This proves that it required a "special revelation from God" to locate Mt. Sinai and that no one of her day agreed with her.
4. Eusebius has a dictionary of places called the Onomasticon which he wrote at the same time Helena chose Mt. Musa in a dream. It is interesting that Eusebius has no entry for Mt. Sinai although he does mention under the "Horeb" entry that Mt. Sinai is beside Horeb. We believe this is because he located Mt. Sinai in Arabia and this conflicted with Helena's choice. But a careful reading of Eusebius proves he believed that Mt. Sinai and Mt. Horeb, Wilderness of Shur, Midian, the desert of the Saracens, wilderness of Paran, Arabian Desert were all were all transjordan.

## **C. What authorities say about Mt. Sinai in Arabia:**

1. Sinai in Arabia and of Midian, Beke, Charles T. (London, 1878): Land of Midian, east of Gulf of Eilat
2. The Route of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, Lucas, Alfred (London, 1938) Upper north of Midian, northeast of Aqaba: Jebel Baghir
3. The Site of the Biblical Mount Sinai, Neilsen, D., (Copenhagen, 1928), Land of Edom, near Petra
4. "The Epic Traditions of Early Israel," in *The Poet and the Historians*, ed. Richard Elliot Friedman,(Cambridge, MA, 1983): Land of Midian
5. "Volcanic interpretation of Ex. 19:16-18 has led some to place Sinai in northwest Arabia. near Midian. where the nearest volcanoes active in historical times are located. Another argument supporting this site involves Moses' marriage into a Midianite family (Ex. 3:1:

18:11). Moses' father-in-law Jethro is also called a Kenite (Judges 1:16: 4:11), and the Kenites were a clan of wandering smiths (Nu. 10:29) whose presence near the mines of Sinai would hardly be surprising." (ISBE Sinai)

6. "Greene's Theory: Another theory, put forward by Mr. Baker Greene (The Hebrew Migration from Egypt). ... Mr. Greene supposed Elim (Ex 15:27) to be Elath (De 2:8), now 'Ailah at the head of the Gulf of 'Akabah; and that Sinai therefore was some unknown mountain in Midian." (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, ISBE, 1911 AD, Sinai)

#### **D. Bible translators who believe Mt. Sinai was in Arabia:**

1. "While Moses was still in Midian, the Lord said to him, "Go back to Egypt, for all those who wanted to kill you are dead." Exodus 4:19 (Good news for modern man)
2. "God said to Moses in Midian: "Go. Return to Egypt. All the men who wanted to kill you are dead." Exodus 4:19 (The message)

#### **E. There is no indication in the Bible that Moses ever left Midian when he saw the burning bush**

1. There is no reason why the burning bush could not be near Midian in Arabia.
2. The Bible does not say that Moses made a long journey away from Midian.
3. The Bible does not say that Moses went into the Sinai Peninsula.
4. If Queen Helena had not chosen Mt. Sinai in 325 AD in a dream, the natural reading of the texts show that Moses was in Midian when at the foot of Mt. Sinai.
5. "When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters; and they came to draw water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock." Exodus 2:15-16
6. At Mt Sinai: "Now Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the back side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. " Exodus 3:1
7. After leaving Sinai and back home in Midian: "Now the Lord said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, for all the men who were seeking your life are dead." Exodus 4:19
8. "Now the Lord said to Aaron, "Go to meet Moses in the wilderness." So he went and met him at the mountain of God and kissed him. " Exodus 4:27
9. At Mt Sinai: "Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people, how the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt. " Exodus 18:1 "Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was camped, at the mount of God. " Exodus 18:5 "Then Moses bade his father-in-law farewell, and he went his way into his own land." Exodus 18:27



## **F. Geographic and archeological markers at Sinai:**

1. Elijah's Cave: 1 Ki 19:8-9
2. Cleft of the rock when God passed by Moses: Ex 33:22
3. A volcano with blackened summit? : Ex 19:18-19. Geologist Dr. John Morris told the author, that the Jebel al-Lawz rock he examined is normal metamorphic rock typical for the volcanic area it came from, there was nothing strange about it nor any sign of plants melted into the rock.
4. The plateau where Moses Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and the 70 elders stood: Ex 24:1-11
5. Boundary markers that are "18 feet in diameter and 5 feet apart": Ex 19:12, 21-24
6. The location of where the golden calf altar was built: Ex 32:5
7. The twelve pillars Moses built: Ex 24:4
8. The Rock that Moses struck and the resulting river bed that resulted.

## **F. Archeology at Mt. Lawz:**

1. About all you can really say about Mt. Lawz for certain is that it is in Arabia like Paul said. It is the highest Mountain like Josephus said. It is a volcano as the bible indicates. Unlike Mt. Musa, Mt. Lawz does have a cave that might be "Elijah's cave". And there is a plateau half way up the mountain where the 70 elders could have stood.
2. Having said all this, very little archeological work has been done at Lawz. Remember this is Saudi Arabia where Mecca is. Muslims don't like the idea of allowing formal research that will prove the Jews have a valid right to the promised land.
3. The first step of discovering the archeology of the Hebrew presence at Mt. Lawz, is getting the word out that this is Mt. Sinai.

## **G. Major events at Mt. Sinai**

(and the wilderness of Sinai where the camp was located)

1. The Hebrews will spend 11 months, 5 days at Sinai before moving north.
2. Remember that while Moses had access to Mt. Sinai, the Hebrew camp was 5-10 km east of Sinai. Most of the events that took place at Sinai, happened in the wilderness camp, not at the mountain.
3. Moses saw the burning bush in the wilderness of Sinai, not at Mt. Sinai: Acts 7:30. The burning bush marked the spot where Israel would camp several month later.
4. God makes his first appearance, by "Dawning from the North" when he descended on Mt. Sinai. This spectacular hidden gem of information has been missed by most Gospel preachers. When the people were waiting at the foot of Mt. Sinai for God to descend, a small cloud appeared in the distant north from the direction of Mt. Paran or the land of Edom. This proves that Mt. Sinai must be due south of Edom. Scripture pictures the "throne of God" as being in the north. Amazingly, God "dawned from the north". There is a direct line north, from Mt. Lawz, through Mt. Paran (Edom) to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is due north of Mt. Lawz.
5. Moses received the Ten Commandments.
6. Moses may have built a barrier wall at the foot of the mountain as a line not to be crossed by the people. We do not know if barrier is a stone wall, a line of stones on the ground,

human guards or a physical reference point, like "Do not cross the line between this tree and that cliff": "You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death.'" Exodus 19:12

7. Moses brought water out of the rock. Detailed outline.
8. The first of two census' was done at Mt. Sinai: Numbers 1:19. The second was just before crossing the Jordan 40 years later: Numbers 26:2. There were 2.5 million Jews in the Exodus, not 5,000 as some wrongly suggest. The Hebrew word for 1000 is "elep" and cannot mean "clans" in reference to the exodus population numbers.
9. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire and were killed: Numbers 3:4
10. One stop before the wilderness of Sinai Amalekites attack Israel at Rephidim: Exodus 17:8

## **H. Sequence of events before Sinai:**

1. Moses left Egypt at the age of 80 and lived in Arabia, in the land of Midian: Ex 2:15
2. While tending a flock of sheep that were owned by Jethro (Moses father in law), Moses took the sheep to the "behind side of the wilderness" and encountered God at the Burning bush. This would be just outside of the normal area that Jethro controlled, but beside it in an adjacent area. Ex 3:1
3. At the same time that Moses saw God at the burning bush, God also told Aaron, who was in Egypt, to travel all the way to Midian and meet Moses at Mt. Sinai.
4. Moses went back to Midian where God told Moses that the Pharaoh who tried to kill him were dead and to begin the journey to Egypt. Ex 4:18 Moses takes his wife and children with him. Although the Bible does not say, it must have been at this same time that God told Moses to get his son circumcised. While en route, God was going to kill Moses because he was listening to the protests of his wife over the commandment of God. Big mistake, when God tells you one thing and your wife another... obey God! Hot lip from God is worse than cold shoulder from your wife. Ex 4:24
5. Although the Bible doesn't say, Moses must have been told to go to Mt. Sinai where he met up with his brother Aaron. They must have taken the route over top of the Gulf of Aqaba.
6. They depart Mt. Sinai all travel back to Egypt where Aaron reports to the Hebrews that God cares for them. This causes the people to worship God. Ex 4:31.
7. Detailed calendar for events between Goshen and Sinai: [click here](#)





The Real Mt. Sinai  
What can we know?

# Exodus Route



[www.bible.ca](http://www.bible.ca)  
Steve Rudd 2006