

Egypt: A Love-Hate Relationship

Introduction

Egypt is an inescapable presence for the ancient nation of Israel which is much smaller and weaker by comparison. Nevertheless, the two are so entwined that should someone from another planet come upon them, he, she or it would consider them as one nation, not two. If not that, then they'd give the impression of two nations which once had been united but now are split. Despite their differences, both are caught in an inextricable relationship, far more complicated and with far greater historical consequences than more proximate neighbors. The chief reason for this is theological and all that entails.

What provided impetus for this document is that as soon as God does something spectacular for the Israelites, they not only forget it but do so with frightful regularity. The immediacy with which it happens is astonishing...not on one or two occasions but a whole Bible's worth. Every so often the Lord steps in with a rebuke, punishment or something even worse followed by Israel repenting quickly. Things level off a bit but not for long. It's back to business as usual. At the same time this predictable and somewhat boring process is inspiring. It's totally unique in world history, for no other nation recounts its misdeeds in such a matter-of-fact manner as Israel. Indeed, we could take this as incontestable proof that such a divine being exists. Not just some but all nations glorified their history, glossing over embarrassing elements and passing any blame to neighboring peoples.

The Bible contains oodles of references to Egypt which means some sifting of passages was necessary pertinent to this document. An attempt was made to get the most pertinent ones even though in the end they represent the same basic themes. Chief among them, of course, is the above mentioned love-hate relationship between Israel and Egypt. Although remembrance of Egypt after the Exodus usually is presented in negative fashion, the Israelites had a persistent fondness for having lived there over a period of some four hundred years. On a number of occasions the people were sorely tempted to return, but that would be to their detriment.

The negative impression of Egypt has been drilled into us by the way the unnamed pharaoh had treated the Israelites as slaves, not allowing them to go into the desert to worship the Lord. We're all familiar with the back-and-forth between Moses and pharaoh until the situation came to a dramatic head with the Egyptian army being drowned in the Red Sea. End of story? By no means. Centuries prior to this momentous event we have the important role of Joseph. After having been sold as a slave by his brothers, he rises in prominence, eventually being second after pharaoh. After his dramatic self-revelation to his brothers he invites them and his father Isaac to dwell in Egypt in order to escape the widespread famine. They take up residence there and prosper...not just that but for some four hundred years which is quite amazing. In other words, Egypt became to the Israelites something of a nourishing mother. The incident with pharaoh and Moses, despite its importance, is almost a footnote in that lengthy period of time.

Although it isn't mentioned, we can be certain that the Israelites wished for a new pharaoh to come along who'd make sure that life would go back to normal. Perhaps something similar did happen even more than once while Israel continued to flourish. Nevertheless, this time everyone felt something different was afoot. The people realized as a whole that they had to move on but move on to where and exactly when was the Big Question. This, of course, is where the unnamed pharaoh and Moses step in as key players.

The following passages contain individual scriptural verses with notations on the text which are to be read in the spirit of *lectio divina*, this being the fundamental purpose of the website. Also note the frequent use of verbs "going down" and "coming up" with regard to both Egypt and Israel which provide a backdrop to this long and complicated relationship. On top of it are frequent statements the Lord makes with regard to him being in charge. At first glance this seems something of an overkill, but it's a recognition of how quickly Israel forgets its relationship with him. As the title has it, such is the nature of the love and hate between the two nations.

Please note that many (not all) verses are noted. The ones in Exodus and Deuteronomy are the most important ones because we are closer to the context around which this document is centered.

References

Gn 46.3: Then he said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt; for I will there make of you a great nation."

The context is the Lord addressing Israel which as vs. 2 puts it, is "in visions of the night," *mar'ah* being derived from the common verb to see. Before this Israel had come to Beersheba to offer sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. This vision...seeing...sets in motion the forebears of the nation of Israel to dwell in Egypt for a period of four hundred years, Joseph having prearranged everything.

Although the Lord promises to make of Israel a great nation in Egypt, the real motive is to escape the famine that had gripped the land. Joseph in his wisdom had provided sufficient grain not just for Egypt but for other peoples. If it weren't for him, Israel would have been barred from entry.

Gn 46.4: I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again; and Joseph's hand shall close your eyes.

This verse follows on the heels of the previous one where the Lord told Israel to go down to Egypt whereas here he more or less repeats himself, the verb being *yarad* also as to descend. Opposite to this *yarad*, if you will, is *halah* or to go up but nothing is said of the time span between the two. For the Lord such a difference is irrelevant. Somehow Israel-the-person knew that through this descent he will ascend as Israel-the-nation. That is to say, Israel will *yarad* as an individual but *halah* as a people.

The Lord comforts Israel about to make this journey to Egypt in his old age by saying that Joseph himself will close his eyes. “Then Joseph fell on his father’s face and wept over him and kissed him” [Gn 50.1].

Gen 47.6: The land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land; let them dwell in the land of Goshen; and if you know any able men among them, put them in charge of my cattle.

Quite remarkable words from the pharaoh whom Joseph had served which reveals both his open-mindedness and trust since Egyptians generally were reluctant to allow foreigners to dwell within their borders. Equally remarkable is the way he extends the invitation, not unlike saying come in and take what you want, where you want and when you want. Granted, it was a small group, but that group was destined to multiply into a nation within a nation. The verb *yataw* (to please, to be well) is used for “best” of the land which brings this a step further; it being amplified by the people dwelling in Goshen, supposedly the best part of Egypt.

As for the cattle, the Egyptians were noted for their large herds, and for Joseph to delegate men to oversee them is yet another indication of pharaoh’s trust and reliance upon him. As for the locals and other Egyptians, chances are they resented these people who viewed this as a kind of mini-invasion. However, there don’t seem to be any records of strife over the next four hundred years.

Gen 47.11: Then Joseph settled his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

Yashav is the verb to settle, also to sit down which Joseph had done with regard to his extended family. To top it off, he had the full weight of pharaoh’s authority behind him, *tsvah* which also means to set up. Chances are the pharaoh hoped his family might share some of his character but on a practical note, he wanted trusted men to raise his cattle.

We can assume that Joseph had respect for inhabitants of the place so as not to uproot them. In actuality, the places available are quite limited, that is, confined to a narrow band of territory on either side of the Nile River. *Achuzah* is the noun for possession which is from the verbal root *’achaz*, to seize. Rameses is another name for Goshen named after a previous pharaoh.

Gen 50.26: So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

This is the very last verse of the Book of Genesis which begins with the conjunctive *v-* translated as “so” but often as “and.” As pointed out in other documents of this nature, the conjunctive shows a close connection between events. The one at hand is no different and has greater significance by reason of its position on the threshold of the Book of Exodus.

Aron is the noun for ark, also a chest often made of cedar which is suitable for the coffin at hand. What's significant is that in vs. 24 Joseph tells his brothers that God will visit them, and that they are to carry his remains from Egypt. *Paqad* is the verb which has a certain military connotation as to muster. That is precisely what happened four centuries later when Israel left Egypt under the direction of Moses. As for when this *paqad* will happen, Joseph gives no clues. Most likely his brothers thought it would happen once the famine blew over. At the same time, we can assume they quickly forgot about returning since they were offered the "best of the land" [Gn 47.11] and were in no rush to leave it for one that had been ravaged by famine.

Ex 3.9-10: And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.

A combination of two verses which begins with three words setting the tone for the Lord being aware of Israel's plight: the conjunctive *v-*, *hatah* and *hineh*. The conjunctive shows the close connection between the Lord's intent to rescue Israel. *Hatah* or "now" pertains to the immediacy of the situation and *hineh* as "behold", that the Lord will be taking action on behalf of the Israelites. All three are directed to the *tsehaqah* or cry of the people which has reached the Lord, this noun indicative of uttering distress. *Tsehaqah* is described as coming to the Lord which evokes an ascent to heaven above. Once there, it assumes a visual form which is why the Lord sees it as oppression or *latchats* also as calamity or distress. Note the verbal root of this noun is used in connection with the Egyptians.

Vs. 10 begins with the second use of *hatah* which goes untranslated with regard to the Lord addressing Moses whose task will be to bring forth his people from Egypt. Note the two verbs *shalach* and *yatsa'*, to send and to bring forth. Despite this divine assurance, Moses balks in the next verse, this happening just before the Lord reveals his name.

Ex 3.12: He said, "But I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God upon this mountain."

"But" is the conjunctive *v-* in response to Moses' objection about not being capable to bring the Israelites from Egypt. Practically speaking, the Lord being with Moses is far more important than revelation of his name which happens in the next verse. If the Lord is with him, he will have the same relationship with his people. However, closing the gap is of main concern for Moses' hesitancy which is why the Lord will give him a sign, *'oth* also as token or proof. Unfortunately the sign will not manifest itself until much later or after considerable difficulty with the Egyptian pharaoh, the dramatic crossing of the Red Sea and Israel complaining about a lack of water and food shortly thereafter.

Moses, of course, is fully aware of Israel's subjection to the Egyptians, *havad* often being used for this. It's the same verb the Lord uses with respect to the mountain on which he is right now, but it's a *havad* which is vastly different. Also he might have thought that being in such a desolate place would last indefinitely, something for which the Israelites were woefully unprepared.

Ex 3.16: Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, “The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, ‘I have observed you and what has been done to you in Egypt;’”

This verse continues into the next one as an extended sentence and comes on the heels of “I am who am.” Wisely the Lord counsels communicating his revelation to the elders who would give the best advice to Moses. This would prepare the Israelites to go along. Mentioning the three patriarchs definitely is a selling point, else neither the elders nor people would buy into what Moses is proposing. As for the people, it’s difficult to know whether or no they had lost touch with their pre-Egypt heritage, some four hundred years having gone by. They retained some memories and perhaps customs, handed down most likely through stories.

Paqad (cf. Gn 50.26) is used twice which suggests that the Lord is earnest about his intent. Also note the way Israel’s situation is phrased, “what was done to you.” It leaves little to the imagination.

Ex 3.17: and I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt, to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.

As noted in the last entry, the verse at hand is a continuation where the two are joined by the conjunctive *v-*. The verb “promise” is lacking in the Hebrew text; instead, it has the common verb to speak, *’amar*. Such frequent mention of bringing or going up obviously means to the north or more specifically, the northwest. Such will be the place of freedom from Egypt’s affliction or *hony*. However, the Lord is careful to mention six nations living there with which the Israelites will have to deal with, starting with Canaan or the former home of Israel’s three patriarchs.

Surely the Israelites must have known about these peoples with only the Sinai peninsula separating them. Also stories must have circulated as to how they had absorbed any traces of memory concerning their forefathers. Interestingly the Lord concludes this verse with calling that place a land or *’erets*, also as a nation, inferring that it belongs to the Israelites. It is flowing with milk and honey, *zuv* also as to gush which intimates abundance.

Ex 6.6: Say therefore to the people of Israel, “I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment,”

This verse extends into the next to form a single lengthy sentence. *Laken* or “therefore” serves to bridge what the Lord had said about being attentive to Israel’s plight in the previous verse to what Moses is to communicate to them. While it’s nice to hear the Lord proclaim his identity, what really counts for the people is his intervention which he promises as follows:

-That they're freed from the burdens imposed by the Egyptians, *sovel* often associated with tyranny as is the present case. Note the preposition *tachat* or "under" which reinforces this.

-The Lord will deliver the people from their bondage, the verb being *natsal* connoting a tearing away with regard to *heved*, also as slavery.

-Redeem or *ga'al*, also to set free with outstretched arm and great judgments, *shaphat*.

Gn 6.7: and I will take you for my people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

As noted above, this verse continues from the previous one, the two connected by the conjunctive *v-*. Note the two phrases with the preposition *l-* or "to:"

-*ly leham* read literally as "(take) to me to people," the verb being *laqach*

-*lakem l'E'lohym* or "to you to God" or being such after the just mentioned taking

The reason for these two parts, if you will? That the people know what the Lord had just stated, that is, being their God where emphasis is upon *yadah*, to have intimate knowledge of this relationship. After all, he is the Lord who as noted in 6.6, has brought the people out from under the burdens (*tachat* and *sovel*) of the Egyptians.

Ex 14.11-12: and they said to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."

This verse follows as part of the previous one where pharaoh is hard on the heels of the Israelites who had just left Egypt. Also vs. 12 is included because it has a third rhetorical question, these being the hardest Moses ever had put to him and rightfully so, given the dire circumstances:

-If the Israelites were to die in Egypt, at least they'd be among those who had preceded them over the course of four centuries.

-Of the three question, the second really puts Moses on the spot. He was powerless to answer with the people in front of him and the Egyptians behind him.

-The people remind Moses that they would have preferred to serve the Egyptians, *havad* also as to be a slave (cf. Ex 3.12). The text reads literally as "not this the *davar* which we have *davar* to you?" *Davar* as both noun and verb are left untranslated because it has a fuller sense than simply to say. It's not unlike the Greek *logos*, word (or to speak) as giving expression.

Ex 15.26: saying, "If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord your God and do that which is right in his eyes and give heed to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases upon you which I put upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord, your healer."

This is part of an extended sentence begun in vs. 25 and actually consists of two of them. "If" suggests a condition set down by the Lord after having proved the Israelites at the waters of

Marah, the first of what will turn out to be many of them. There are four parts which are linked by three instances of the conjunctive *v-* translated as “and.” Although *’im* or “if” occurs once, obviously it’s applicable to all four:

-The verb *shamah* (to hear) used twice is rendered as “diligently hearken” along with *qol* or voice which has the preposition *l-* prefaced to it, “to the voice.”

-Do (*hasah*, also to make) what’s right or *yashar* (connotes smoothness or straight) in the Lord’s eyes.

-Give heed (*’azan*, to hear) to the Lord’s commandments or *mitsvah*.

-Keep (*shamar*, as to be a watchman) the Lord’s statues or *choq*.

The result of these four? The Lord won’t afflict the people with the same diseases (*machlah*) as he did with the Egyptians, that is, the ten plagues, *negeph* being the word used there which connotes being smitten. And so the Lord reveals something new of himself just the other side of the Red Sea and before the Israelites enter Sinai proper, that he is a healer, the participle *rapha’* which brings up the image of a physician.

Ex 16.3: and said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

This verses is part of the preceding one where the people murmured against Moses and Aaron. The conjunctive *v-* as “and” shows an immediate contact between such murmuring and the expression of it. The people lamented the abundance of food in Egypt compared with the meager supplies in the wilderness. They refer to themselves as a *qahal* or a sacred congregation designed in part with the intention to have Moses take immediate action. He, of course, recognized this a collective whining.

Ex 17.3: But the people thirsted there for water, and the people murmured against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?"

Here thirsting and murmuring go hand-in-hand, *lun* for the latter which also means to dwell, to abide. In this context *lun* is with the preposition *hal-* or “upon” with regard to Moses, that the murmuring took its abode upon him, if you will. The murmuring breaks out into a full-throated complaint that will reoccur numerous times in the Sinai desert. So in a sense it’s good practice for Moses.

Ex 18.11: Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods because he delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians when they dealt arrogantly with them.

Words of Jethro, priest of Midian, to Moses after acknowledging that the Lord has delivered Israel from Egypt. *Yadah* (cf. Gn 6.7) is the verb to know, for Jethro as well as others in Midian quickly got word of this dramatic event. Prior to this he may have had his doubts about the Lord’s ability to pull off such a dramatic miracle but now realizes that he is above all gods, including his own.

Instead of the verb “delivered” the text reads literally “that in the matter (*davar*, cf. Ex 14.11-12) they were arrogant on (*hal-*) them.” The verb is *zud*, to act insolently and connotes boiling.

Ex 22.21: You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Ger is the noun for stranger, also a sojourner which has a kind of double identity: one not of Israel and the other as Israel in Egypt. The two verbs *yanah* and *lachats* or to act violently and to press or squeeze are applicable to both. Implied here is remembrance of the past with regard to *ger*.

Ex 32.11: But Moses besought the Lord his God and said, "O Lord, why does your wrath burn hot against your people which you have brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?"

This verse is the first of two questions, *chalah* or to beseech connoting travail which is apt here because in vs. 9 the Lord threatened to destroy the people, in vs. 9 calling them stiff-necked, *qatseh* also as firm or heavy. Moses is fully aware of the circumstances yet decides to go ahead with challenging the Lord whose wrath burns hot against the people. The noun is *'aph* (also as nose) with the verb *charah* or to burn, to kindle and found in the verse before when the Lord says that he wants to act accordingly. Moses is confident enough to put the Lord on the spot. Referring to the Exodus will do the trick, something that he will exploit again along with prophets of a later time.

Ex 33.1: The Lord said to Moses, "Depart, go up hence, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.'"

Two verbs: *halach* and *halah* (cf. Gn 46.4) or to go and to go up with regard to Moses and the people, Moses being named separately because he is leading the people, this having begun when they were in Egypt. Thus *halach* and *halah* which had commenced there continue into the present and into the future. In the verse at hand, both apply to leaving Sinai for Canaan which is identified with the three patriarchs who had lived there and from which Israel had been absent for so long. Actually the Lord quotes Gn 12.7 as a reminder: “To your descendants I will give this land” after which Abram had built an altar to commemorate the event.

Lev 18.3: You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt where you dwelt, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes.

Note the four references to *hasah* (to do; cf. Ex 15.26) which without saying so directly refers to worship of their respective gods, etc. For the Israelites both peoples are engaged in the same practices from which they are forbidden. The same prohibition applies to their respective statutes (*choq*, cf. Ex 15.26). The Israelites were familiar with those of Egypt but not of Canaan where the real danger lies.

Lev 19.34: The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

Another reference to *ger* (cf. Ex 22.21) or stranger with the verb from which it's derived, *gur* also as to turn aside from the way. The connection between this *ger* and the Israelites is made that much closer by the preposition *l* being prefaced to "you:" i.e., "to you." And so this small word joins the two peoples, making the *ger* as a native or *'ezrach* which comes from a verbal root meaning to shoot forth.

The Lord seals this commonality by the command to love this stranger, *'ahav* fundamentally as to long after. This is based on the now familiar reminder that Israel had been a *ger* in Egypt, something the Lord never tires to bring him.

Lev 26.13: I am the Lord your God who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt that you should not be their slaves; and I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect.

Another reference where the Lord states what seems obvious about his divinity. However, it's necessary because the Israelites are prone to forget this as with the prohibition noted in Lev 18.3. And so the people are caught in between two places with alien gods, Egypt and Canaan. Although reference is to not being a slave or *heved* (cf. Ex 6.6) to the Egyptians, being a *heved* to their gods is implied. I.e., it's a warning not to have this *heved* transferred to the Canaanite divinities. The Lord seals this solemn request by making the people walk erect, the verb *qum* or to arise suggesting a continuous process.

Num 11.20: but a whole month until it comes out at your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you because you have rejected the Lord who is among you and have wept before him saying, "Why did we come forth out of Egypt?"

An extended sentence begun in the previous verse which has a somewhat humorous though realistic picture of a collective gluttony. I.e., the food which the Lord has provided became the opposite to nourishing; it turned out to be loathsome, *zara'*, the only use of this word in the Bible. Such *zara'* follows the people having rejected (*ma'as*) the Lord, this being made all the worse by reason of him being in their midst, *qerev* also that which is interior. From there the people had wept, *baka'* which in this context is more as whining which manifested in the question they asked aloud, hoping that the Lord tunes in to it.

Num 14.2-4: And all the people of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron; the whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why does the Lord bring us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey; would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" And they said to one another, "Let us choose a captain, and go back to Egypt."

The proper noun Egypt occurs several times within these three verses which is why they're jammed together. The context? The first verse reads that the people literally "raised and gave their

voices and wept in the night” over the report from the spies Joshua had sent to Canaan. That can be summed up by the concluding words of the previous chapter, “we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them.” I.e., the view is mutual. Note that the spies presented their report as objectively as possible while knowing full well it would upset the people.

Vs. 2 has both “all the people” and “whole congregation,” the first literally as “all the sons of Israel” and *hedah* which is also means an appointed meeting, that the people assembled precisely to do this *lun* or murmuring (cf. Ex 17.3) literally “upon (*hal-*) Moses and upon Aaron.” In this verse they come off with two rapid-fire exclamations, hoping that the Lord listens as is the case noted in Num 11.20. For them, to die in Egypt is pretty much the same as dying in the wilderness.

In vs. 3 the Israelites continue their whining by blurting out two questions, the second intended to pierce the hearts of Moses and Aaron by reason of bringing their wives and little ones into the picture. Finally they asked aloud—more to test the two leaders than to actually do something about it—to pick a captain who’ll return the people to Egypt. Wishful thinking, of course, because if they did, they would face a fate worse than before. Not only did they leave their slavery but brought about destruction of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea. All that their patriarch Joseph had done and his memory have been wiped out from the Egyptians’ collective memory.

Num 20.5: And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain, or figs, or vines, or pomegranates; and there is no water to drink.

The context of this verse is the death of Miriam and a lack of water. The people contended with Moses, the verb being *ryv* in vs. 3, also to strive. Admittedly they had a point, calling their present location an evil (*rah*) place completely devoid of delectable produce from the land, especially water.

Num 21.5: And the people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food."

Here the people speak or *davar* (cf. Ex 18.11) literally “in (*b-*) God and in Moses” (compare with “upon (*hal-*) Moses and upon Aaron” in Num 14.2-4. By now this complaining has become wearily familiar as to why Moses had brought the people into the Sinai wilderness. In addition to complaining about a lack of food and water, they now consider the quails and manna from heaven as food which is worthless. The complaint reads literally as “our soul (*nepesh*) is irritated useless (*qelqel*, also as despicable) bread, the verb being *quts* also as to be weary of.

Deut 1.27: and you murmured in your tents and said, “Because the Lord hated us he has brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to give us into the land of the Amorites, to destroy us.”

This is an extended sentence begin in the previous verse where the people balked at entering Canaan after they heard the dire report from those spies who had just returned from there. *Ragan* is the verb to murmur which also means to whisper or to backbite (i.e., compare with *lun*,

Num 14.2-4) and is heightened by the people doing it in the privacy of their tents. If you could walk through the camp you could hear this soft whispering, a fact that didn't escape Moses who obviously found it unsettling.

Wrongly the people accuse the Lord for hating them, the noun *sin'ah* being used, literally as "saying in hatred." Here they single out the Amorites who are intent on destroying them, *shamad* also as to exterminate. By using such words as in this verse the Israelites have learned how to get Moses' attention and put him on the spot.

Deut 4.37: And because he loved your fathers and chose their descendants after them and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power,

This verse extends all the way through vs. 30. Note the three conjunctives *v-* "and" which gives this and the following two verses a sense of close connection and quick pace of action. In sum, each one serves to lead into the other.

Repeatedly Moses needs to encourage the people, that the Lord brought them from Egypt not because of any personal merit but because he had loved (*'ahav*, cf. Lev 19.34) their fathers. *Koach* or power (also as might) is equivalent to *'ahav*, the two being interchangeable.

Deut 5.15: You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

This is the first instance among those at hand to the verb *zakar* (to remember), important insofar as it relates to having been a *heved* (cf. Lev 26.13) or servant (actually a slave) in Egypt. A key word here is *natah* (to extend) or outstretched with regard to the image of God's hand meaning always it is such.

The second of two words found for the first time is literally the "day of the Sabbath" and is mentioned for the first time in Ex 16.23: "This is what the Lord has commanded: "Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord." In the verse at hand the verb *hasah* (cf. Lev 18.3; to make, to do) translates as "to keep" and thus intimates a certain type of activity which doesn't exactly fall under what this verb normally signifies.

Deut 6.12: then take heed lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

An extended sentence beginning with vs. 10 or when the Lord brings the people into the land promised to the three patriarchs. After listing all the benefits to be put at their disposal...things the people hadn't worked for nor earned...there comes the verb *shamar* (cf. Ex 15.26; 'then' isn't in the Hebrew) or to keep guard as a watchman. It is with regard to not forgetting (*shakach*) that it is the Lord who brought them from Egypt or house of bondage or *heved* (cf. Deut 5.15). "House" is added for effect in that it suggests a near absolute form of slavery.

Deut 7.18: you shall not be afraid of them, but you shall remember what the Lord your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt,

An extended sentence beginning with vs. 17 and ending with vs. 19. The exhortation not to fear (*yare'*, also to show reverence) nations or *goyim* greater than they are or those nations within Canaan. Again, *zakar* is the crucial element against *yare'*. It's as though the Israelites are to hold before them the Egyptians when confronting the *goyim*, the two essentially being the same.

Deut 8.14: then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,

The longest of extended sentences encountered thus far, beginning with vs. 11 and going all the way through vs. 16. The verse at hand begins with the conjunctive *v*-translated as "then" which connects the prosperity the people will enjoy and the consequences should they forget its divine source. That consequence is submission to foreign deities which is another kind of bondage. Cf. Deut 6.12 for last reference to "house of bondage" or *heved*. Here the lifting of one's heart brings about this disastrous result, *rum* and *lev*.

Deut 9.7: Remember and do not forget how you provoked the Lord your God to wrath in the wilderness; from the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the Lord.

A strongly worded verse in two parts where both *zakar* and *shakach* (cf. Deut 7.18 and 6.12 respectively) are combined with regard to having provoked the Lord to wrath, *qatsaph*. If the Israelites had done this in the wilderness, they're bound to repeat it in Canaan, hence the present warning is for their benefit. This persistence reflects a rebellious attitude against the Lord, *marah* (cf. Ex 15.26 for proper name), the preposition *him*, literally "with the Lord" suggestive of it.

Deut 9.12: Then the Lord said to me, "Arise, go down quickly from here; for your people whom you have brought from Egypt have acted corruptly; they have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them; they have made themselves a molten image."

These are words the Lord addresses to Moses on the mountain, he having been there forty days and forty nights when he was given the two tablets of stone. This verse shows that the Lord can see what Moses cannot, calling the Israelites with a barely concealed contempt "your people." If this hadn't happened, perhaps the Lord would have revealed much more of himself, a fact that would affect history as well as theological reflection. Also note that the Lord puts the responsibility upon Moses for having brought the people from Egypt...true but it was the Lord who wants to shift it to Moses.

The Lord levels three accusations against the Israelites:

-*shachat* or to act corruptly, also to mar or to spoil by corrupting

-*sur* and *mahar* as used with regard to Moses descending the mountain
-*masekah* or molten image

Moses was all too familiar with the first two, but the third? That was intolerable and even before reaching the camp he knew he had to take desperate measures. Although he had suspected his own brother Aaron was tied in with all this, it still came as a shock.

Deut 11.10: For the land which you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt from which you have come where you sowed your seed and watered it with your feet like a garden of vegetables;

This verse is part of an extended sentence running through vs. 12 comparing Canaan with Egypt. Implied is the benefit of the Nile River which provided a constant source of nourishment. When the Israelites first heard these words they must have thought to themselves that their murmuring against the Lord and Moses was justified despite the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea.

As for mention of feet, the NIV has the following footnote: "Irrigation channels dug by foot and/or fed by devices powered by foot brought the water of the Nile to the gardens in Egypt."

As for the land or *'erets* (cf. Ex 3.17) the Israelites are about to take possession (*yarash*: to possess as an inheritance), it's in sharp contrast described as being comprised of hills and valleys. Despite this and most importantly, it's one which the Lord cares for, *darash* fundamentally as to seek and implies applying oneself. Note that *'erets* is used twice, one for Egypt and one for Canaan.

Deut 13.10: You shall stone him to death with stones because he sought to draw you away from the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

A response to any relative or "friend who is as your own soul" (vs. 6; *nepesh*: cf. Num 21.5) who entices an Israelite to serve other gods, *sut* also as to allure away, the sense of which is not unlike the verb *nadach*, to draw away. Here "house of bondage" noted last in Deut 8.14 can apply to what would happen should anyone follow this twofold *sut/nadach* which literally is "from upon" the Lord (*min* and *hal*).

Deut 16.12: You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt; and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

Zakar (cf. Deut 9.7) or to remember with regard to Israel's past, the collective nation being a singular slave or *heved* (cf. Deut 8.14). This reminder is prefaced, if you will, by mention of those who aren't full members of the community noted in the previous verse. This includes the Levites, the sojourner, the fatherless and widow whom the Lord is careful to note as being "among you" or *qerev* with the preposition *b-*, literally as "in your midst or center."

This remembrance sheds new and purposeful light upon the care to observe the Lord's statutes, *shamar* and *hasah* (cf. Deut 6.12 and 5.15 respectively). *Choq* is the noun for statutes (cf. Lev 18.3).

Deut 17.16: Only he must not multiply horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to multiply horses since the Lord has said to you, “You shall never return that way again.”

This verse is in reference to Israel setting a king over themselves which the Lord endorses. Compare with later in their history where the Lord is displeased with this request (cf. 1Sam 8.4 +). Horses are essential for creating a mobile army which a future king might be tempted to do. Also he might have the people return to Egypt, the reason for which isn't given. That isn't important here; the mere fact of bringing up the prospect hopefully would suffice to strike fear into the people.

To both the Lord responds emphatically that the people are never to return again. Despite such clear warnings, the people continued to long for Egypt, this being a constant temptation. When it did arise, surely the wiser among them must have reminded them that if they did return, the Egyptians would treat them worse than before.

Deut 24.18: but you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this.

This and the previous verse form one extended sentence where the conjunctive *v-* introducing the verse at hand is “but.” It shows the close connection with not perverting justice due to the sojourner, fatherless or taking a widow's garment as a pledge. The verb is *sur* or to turn aside with respect to *mishpat* or justice. Should the Israelites fail to remember or *zakar* that they were a slave (*heved*, cf. Deut 16.12), the less fortunate just noted will take vengeance upon them, this with the help of the Lord.

The source of this *zakar* is the Lord having redeemed Israel, *padah* also as to ransom or to purchase. The key word in this verse is *hal-ken* or “therefore” because it makes all this a command to be carried out, *tsava'* and *hasah* (cf. Deut 16.12).

Deut 24.22: You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.

Another command to *zakar* or to remember with Israel having been a *heved* in Egypt. The command to do (*tsava'* and *hasah* as in the previous verse) refers to a *davar* or literally word-as-expression (cf. Ex 18.11) or when the Israelites harvest their vineyards. They are to leave anything left behind for the sojourner, fatherless and widow.

Deut 28.68: And the Lord will bring you back in ships to Egypt, a journey which I promised that you should never make again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no man will buy you.

The key to this verse is vs. 58 where the Lord comes off with a stern warning. If the Israelites aren't careful to do (*shamar* and *hasah*, cf. Deut 16.12 and 24.22 respectively) the *davar* of the law

or *Torah*, he will bring them back to Egypt. This has echoes of Deut 17.16 where the Lord cautioned about the king the people would appoint who wanted to return to Egypt and raise what was necessary to get there. All in all the Israelites have become so perverse that no one would make an offer to purchase them. With this prospect in front of them, the Israelites have no choice but to enter the land of Canaan.

Jos 5.4: And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the males of the people who came out of Egypt, all the men of war, had died on the way in the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt.

The significance of this verse consists in making a distinction between two generations: those who had been raised in Egypt as well as having crossed the Red Sea and those who are born in the wilderness and are about to enter Canaan. Note that the text calls the first generation “men of war.” While they had fought several peoples in the Sinai wilderness...chiefly local tribes...the second generation would face even more formidable enemies. As for the two generations, those who experienced the Exodus must have done their best to encourage the younger one, for they had engaged in this perilous journey for their sake as well as others destined to come after them.

Jos 5.6: For the people of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness till all the nation, the men of war that came forth out of Egypt, perished because they did not hearken to the voice of the Lord; to them the Lord swore that he would not let them see the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey.

As with the previous verse, this one distinguishes between two generations. It is significant because the second one will be transformed into a true nation, returning to the land of their forefathers after some four hundred years. Thus all the generations from the time of Joseph to the present were exiles from their homeland.

Not listening to (literally ‘in,’ *b-*) the voice of the Lord (*shamah* and *qol*, cf. Ex 15.26 for both) characterizes the former generation. They are not unlike Moses whom the Lord forbade to enter (cf. Num 20.12). However, like Moses perhaps they were allowed catch a glimpse of it (cf. Deut 34.1+). For Canaan flowing with milk and honey, cf. Ex 3.17.

Jos 24.7: And when they cried to the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did to Egypt; and you lived in the wilderness a long time.

This verse jumps a considerable distance from the contents of the previous one which mentions Egypt, that being an experience of the past. Attention has to be focused on the present, the conquest of Canaan.

The context is the covenant Joshua makes at Shechem where he reminds the people of their forefathers, including Moses. Of the ten plagues, he singles out the one of darkness, *ma'phel* which connotes not having a path as in the desert. However, Ex 10.21 has the more common *choshek*

along with *'aphelah* which is of the same verbal root as *maphel* meaning to be obscure, weak. Note that such darkness was felt or *mush* which also means to touch.

Joshua concludes with reminding the people that they had dwelt in the wilderness literally “many day.”

Jos 24.14: Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord.

Hatah has the conjunctive *v-* prefaced to it, “and now” following a lengthy statement by Joshua noted in the previous verse. There the Lord said that he has given Israel a land without having exerted themselves to possess. In their place are the following four:

- yare'* (cf. Dt 7.18) or fear the Lord
- *havad* (cf. Ex 14.11-12) or serve the Lord, also to be a slave, with *tamym* and *'emeth* or completeness and faith
- sur* (cf. Deut 24.18) or put away gods
- havad* the Lord

As for the last two (*sur* and *havad*), they work hand-in-hand. Despite this command, the people will never be able to fully do it. The second *havad* differs from the first insofar as this *sur* has been carried out.

Jos 24.32: The bones of Joseph which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt were buried at Shechem in the portion of ground which Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money; it became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph.

This is in accord with Joseph's explicit wish in Ex 13.19 along with his prophecy of the Lord visiting them, *paqad* (cf. Ex 6.6). And so the bones of Joseph will serve to make Israel prosper in Canaan just as he was instrument for Israel having prospered in Egypt.

Judg 2.12: and they forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; they went after other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were round about them and bowed down to them; and they provoked the Lord to anger.

An extended sentence beginning with the previous verse where the people served the Baals, *havad* (cf. Jos 24.14) suggestive of being slaves to such divinities. This *havad* carries over as forsaking the Lord, *hazav* as to abandon which contrasts with *halak* 'achary or “went after.”

Savyv or “round about” suggests that this *hazav/halak* 'achary is a bewildering multiple choice of gods from which to choose. Though the impression is that Israel was surrounded, many among them thought that at last they had found relief from the tyranny of the one God who had rebuked them so often, even if it was for their own benefit. The act of bowing down to the alien divinities naturally provoked the Lord, *shachah* and *kahas*, the latter also as to take offense (and rightly so).

Judg 6.8: the Lord sent a prophet to the people of Israel; and he said to them, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of bondage;

An extended sentence beginning with vs. 7 and running through vs. 10, the prophet being Gideon destined to deliver Israel from the Midianites. He repeats the oft-mentioned words encountered thus far about bringing the people from Egypt identified as the house of bondage (*heved*, cf. Deut 24.22) noted last in Deut 13.10. Now that Israel has established itself in Canaan, the reality of Egypt begins to recede more into the background and to assume a more symbolic role signifying slavery and oppression.

Judg 6.9: and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all who oppressed you and drove them out before you and gave you their land;

A continuation from the verse before, *natsal* or to deliver noted last in Ex 6.6. As for the others who had oppressed (*lachs*, cf. Ex 22.21) them, this refers to those whom Israel had encountered in the Sinai wilderness as well as later in Canaan. *Garash* is the verb to drive out, also as to plunder or to spoil after which their *'erets* (land) became Israel's *'erets* (cf. Deut 11.10).

Judg 6.13: And Gideon said to him, "Pray, sir, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this befallen us? And where are all his wonderful deeds which our fathers recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?' But now the Lord has cast us off and given us into the hand of Midian."

Gideon is addressing the angel of the Lord to whom he poses two questions in rapid-fire succession. Note the verb *saphar* or to recount (fundamentally to inscribe). It shows the close connection between the past and the present even if there's reason to doubt it by reason of the Midianites who were afflicting Israel. And so the current crisis is a reminder of what Moses and his generation had to face when confronting pharaoh.

1Sam 6.6: Why should you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? After he had made sport of them, did not they let the people go, and they departed?

The context of this verse? The Philistines had captured the ark of the Lord from the Israelites which caused tumors to break out among them. Their priests and diviners questions to the people as to the uselessness of hardening their hearts, *kavad* fundamentally to be heavy with regard to *lev* (cf. Deut 8.14). This question reveals that the Philistines were well acquainted with the story of Israel's relationship with Egypt, especially pharaoh who made sport of them, *halal* also to vex, to ill-treat. If it happened then, it could happen again with an even worse form of punishment.

1Sam 8.8: According to all the deeds which they have done to me from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you.

The context is Israel having wanted a king and having rejected the Lord from being over them. This can be summed up by the two verbs *hazav* and *havad* or to forsake and to serve or to be a slave not unlike Judg 2.12 where both are found. In addition to this, what stands out are the verb *hasah* (cf. Deut 28.68) and the noun *mahaseh* derived from it (to do and deeds) as they apply to when the Lord had delivered Israel right down to the present. In other words, through the mediation of Samuel the Lord is putting the people squarely on the spot.

1Sam.10.18: and he said to the people of Israel, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.'"

This is an extended sentence begun in the previous verse when Samuel addressed Israel in conjunction with anointing Saul as their first king. In light of their insistence to have a king, Samuel warns the people of how the Lord—not a human king—rescued them not only from Egypt but from other nations that had oppressed them, *lachsats* (cf. Judg 6.9).

2Sam 7.6: I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling.

The context is Nathan telling King David about building a house for the Lord instead of a tent which had been the case ever since Israel was in the Sinai wilderness. The tone of this verse is a gentle complaint that could escalate if nothing is done. Note the verb to dwell and the noun dwelling, *yashav* (cf. Gn 47.11) and *mishkan* (from *shakan*, to lie down).

1Kg 9.9: Then they will say, "Because they forsook the Lord their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore the Lord has brought all this evil upon them."

The context is a dream Solomon had after having built the house of the Lord. Despite its glory, it's provisional. That is to say, should the people lay hold of other gods, worship them (cf. vs. 7) and thus forsake the Lord, he will bring this evil upon them, that is, the temple's destruction. Note the contrast between two verbs, *hazav* (cf. 1Sam 8.8) and *chazaq*, to forsake and to lay hold of, the latter connoting a seizing.

2Kg 17.7: And this was so because the people of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt and had feared other gods

This verse forms an extended sentence which flows into the next one, the context being Hoshea, king of Assyria, capturing Samaria and having carried off the Israelites. The calamity is attributed to the people having sinned (*chata'*, fundamentally to miss the mark) literally "to (*-l-*) the Lord." We have here the now familiar indictment of abandoning the Lord for other gods whom the people feared, *yare'* (cf. Deut 7.18). Not only this, but as vs. 8 says, they walked in the customs (*choq*, cf. Deut 16.12) of the nations the Lord had driven out.

2Kg 17.36: but you shall fear the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm; you shall bow yourselves to him, and to him you shall sacrifice.

An extended sentence begun in the previous verse with regard to the Samaritans. Focus is upon great power and an arm which is outstretch, *koach* and *natah* (cf. Deut 4.37 and Deut 5.15 respectively). By reason both the Samaritans are to bow down and make sacrifice.

2Kg 21.15: because they have done what is evil in my sight and have provoked me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt even to this day.

An extended sentence begin in vs. 14, the context being King Manasseh's abominations which provoked the Lord to anger, *kahas* (cf. Judg 2.12). Note two references to "day:" when Israel's fathers came out of Egypt and the present. Thus there is no distinction between the two.

1Chron 17.21: What other nation on earth is like your people Israel whom God went to redeem to be his people, making for yourself a name for great and terrible things in driving out nations before your people whom you redeemed from Egypt?

David is the person who utters this exclamation which follows the previous verse with one not unlike it. There David exclaims that there's no one (god) which can compare with the Lord who had rescued Israel from Egypt and later on drove out nations. This is within the context of the Lord having revealed to him that he's not to build a temple; that will be up to one of his sons.

David exclaims that the Lord had redeemed (*padah*, cf. Deut 24.18) not just Israel but "his people," third personal modifier making it more direct and intimate. The verb "to make" is *sum* which implies more a putting or setting and thus permanence with regard to the divine name or *shem*. As for those things which are great and terrible (*gadol* and *yare'*, cf. 2Kg 17.7), they refer to the Lord having driven out (*garash*, cf. Judg 6.9) nations along with a second mention of *padah*. It seems there's one *padah* with regard to Egypt in and by itself and another *padah* with regard to Egypt along with nations.

2Chron 7.22: Then they will say, "Because they forsook the Lord the God of their fathers who brought them out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore he has brought all this evil upon them."

Reference is to an appearance by the Lord to King Solomon with regard to the temple in Jerusalem which he had just built. He warns against the consequences of forsaking (*hazav*, cf. 1Kg 9.9) the Lord. Use of "fathers" brings home the fact that the Lord is the same now as he had been at that time.

As for the *hazav* at hand, laying hold of other gods is the consequence, *chazaq* basically the same as in 1Kg 9.9. Then follows worship and servitude to these gods, *shachah* and *havad*; cf. Judg 2.12

and 1Sam 8.8, the latter as to become a slave. Should the people do this, the Lord will bring evil (*rah*, cf. Num 20.5) upon them.

Neh 9.9: And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea,

The context of this verse which continues into the next one is the celebration of the feast of booths where Ezra is addressing the people. *Hony* (cf. Ex 3.17) is the noun for affliction associated with Egypt. Ezra continues at some length recounting Israel's infidelity to the Lord after having entered the Sinai wilderness. He continues for some time until vs. 32 with *vehatah* or "now (the conjunctive *v-*) therefore." He beseeches the Lord for help but does so in a gentle, non-demanding fashion. While reading these verses it's amazing how up to this point Ezra speaks of his nation's propensity to evil in such a matter-of-fact way. Indeed, such openness is unique among all nations of the earth and unlike them, has the wonderful effect of binding Israel to the Lord.

Neh 9.17: they refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders which you performed among them; but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their bondage in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and did not forsake them.

The previous verse and the one at hand form an extended sentence where two words work together, if you will, *qashah* and the negative of *shamah* (cf. Jos 5.6) with the former implying hardness. I.e., the Israelites are hell-bent on getting their own way, even to wanting to return to Egypt under a leader other than Moses. "Let us choose a captain and go back to Egypt" [Num 14.4]. That verse glosses over what Ezra is careful to point out, *havdoth* or bondage.

The second sentence of the verse at hand begins with the important conjunctive *v-* translated as "but." Ezra attributes the following six qualities to the Lord:

- selychah* or the noun for pardon which is in the plural
- chanun* or gracious or to be inclined to be as such
- rachum* or merciful; from *racham* or to love deeply from within
- 'erek-'aphym*, literally as "slow of angers"
- rav-chesed* or literally "great mercies," *chesed* similar to the New Testament *agape*
- hazav* or did (not) forsake or abandon (cf. 2Chron 7.22)

Neh 9.18: Even when they had made for themselves a molten calf and said, "This is your God who brought you up out of Egypt" and had committed great blasphemies,

This verse is an extended sentence running through vs. 19 and refers to Dt 9.12. Note that making this molten (*masekah*) calf is distinct from blasphemies which are great, *ne'atsah* as derived from a verbal root meaning to deride or to hold in contempt. Still, as the next verse or same sentence has it, the Lord showed great mercies, *rachamym* from the same verbal root as *rachum* in Neh 9.17.

Ps 81.5: He made it a decree in Joseph when he went out over the land of Egypt. I hear a voice I had not known:

This verse consists of two sentences, the second continuing into the next one. The verb *sum* (cf. 1Chron 17.21) is more a placing or a setting of *hedoth* or decree, also a testimony in the sense of a precept or law. It has a location, Joseph, which seems to refer to Israel as a whole, this being in accord with a footnote in the NIV, “Joseph—the one elevated to the position of firstborn—represents the whole of his generation and thus also all the descendants of Jacob.” This going out -> upon (*yatsa’* -> *hal-*) suggests a departure as well as victory.

The second sentence seems to be uttered by a priest in the temple with regard to a voice he didn’t recognize, *saphah* also as lips and the verb *yadah* (cf. Ex 18.11). These lips speak of having relieved Israel from slavery.

Ps 81.10: I am the Lord your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

This verse is a continuation of that *saphah* where the Lord makes himself known to the person hearing it but who at first doesn’t know the speaker. After having brought Israel from Egypt, he bids the collective mouth of that people not just to open it but to do so as wide as possible, *rachav*. As soon as they do this, the Lord will fill it which could be a reference to the manna and quails from heaven. If so, we could say that Israel had it’s mouth open while facing heavenward.

Ps 105.23: Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

“Then” is the conjunctive *v-*, indicative of what just preceded or Joseph being set as second after pharaoh over Egypt. *Gur* (cf. Lev 19.34) or to sojourn also means to turn aside which Israel did for some four hundred years though at the time obviously did not realize it would be that long.

Ps 105.38: Egypt was glad when they departed, for dread of them had fallen upon it.

Samach is the verb to be glad, also to rejoice. One such sign of this—and before the destruction of the army in the Red Sea—is found in Ex 12.36: “and the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they despoiled the Egyptians.” In a way, *samach* and *pachad* (dread, also as awe or trembling) work hand in hand.

Ps 106.7: Our fathers when they were in Egypt did not consider your wonderful works; they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love but rebelled against the Most High at the Red Sea.

Sakal is the verb to consider in the sense of look upon, to behold with regard to the Lord’s *pala’* (infinitive) which are the ten plagues. Note the strange lack of *sakal* or basic indifference the Israelites showed except with regard to the last one, the death of the first-born. Such indifference would soon turn to hostility toward the Lord, hence the failure to remember and ensuing

rebellion, *zakar* and *marah* (cf. Deut 24.22 and Deut 9.7 respectively). What makes this especially painful is the manifestation of divine *chesed* (cf. Neh 9.17). However, the *marah* occurs after having exited the Red Sea at the waters bearing this name, Marah (cf. Ex 15.22 +).

Ps 106.21: They forgot God, their Savior who had done great things in Egypt,

This verse continues as one extended sentence into the next one. Here the psalmist stresses the familiar theme of Israel's forgetfulness (*shakach*, cf. Deut 9.7) of God as Savior, the participle *yashah* which is the verbal root for the proper name Jesus. Again, the great things (*gadol*, cf. 1Chron 17.21) refer to the ten plagues to which the Israelites seemed oddly indifferent.

Is 30.2: who set out to go down to Egypt without asking for my counsel, to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!

An extended sentence where vs. 1 begins with *hoy* or "woe" concerning children who are rebellious by going against the Lord's wish to go to Egypt, the verb at hand being *halak* (cf. Judg 2.12). Note that they are in the process of *halak*, not having arrived there, this without asking for the Lord's counsel which reads literally and to the point as "my mouth they have not asked." What they want is to be under pharaoh's protection and to be in Egypt's shadow. As for the former, it reads literally as "to strength in the stronghold," the same verbal root for both terms, *hoz* and *mahoz*.

Is 30.3: Therefore shall the protection of Pharaoh turn to your shame and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt to your humiliation.

Two pairs of two opposites: *mahoz* -> *bosh* (protection -> shame) and *chasoth* -> *chelmah* (shelter -> humiliation). It seems the current generation had completely forgotten the experience of their forefathers and are on the verge of repeating it. However, this time there may not be a Moses to lead the people across the Red Sea.

Is 30.7: For Egypt's help is worthless and empty, therefore I have called her "Rahab who sits still."

Hevel and *ryq* or two nouns as worthless and empty (the former also as vanity) modify the verb *hazar* or to help. A footnote in the RSV says with regard to the second half of this verse, "obscure, perhaps emend to read, 'Rahab who shall be destroyed,' Rahab being a mythological sea dragon.

Is 31.1: Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the Lord!

Hoy or "woe" as in Is 30.2 mirrors the other verses from Isaiah. Note that this applies to those going down or in the process or *yarad* (cf. Gn 46.4) to Egypt which suggests they have a chance to turn back. In other words, two options remain:

1) looking to the Lord, *shahah* implying a looking around which here is with the preposition *hal-*, “upon the Holy One”
-consulting the Lord, *darash* (cf. Deut 11.10) or to seek after

Jer 2.6: They did not say, “Where is the Lord who brought us up from the land of Egypt, who led us in the wilderness, in a land of deserts and pits, in a land of drought and deep darkness, in a land that none passes through where no man dwells?”

The Lord is complaining about how the people failed to ask about the Lord who even at this later stage in their history is identified with deliverance from Egypt. In the next verse the Lord answers himself, if you will, by saying that he had brought Israel into a plentiful land.

Jer 7.25: From the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt to this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day.

Note the following two, *min-* and *had* or “from” and “to.” Although there’s a time difference between them, both are irrelevant as far as the Lord is concerned. A third temporal reference is added, that is, with regard to the Lord sending (*shalach*, cf. Ex 3.9-10). This reads literally as “day to rise early,” the verb being *shakam*, an expression to show how much the Lord cares for his people.

Jer 11.7: For I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, “Obey my voice.”

The verb *hod* or to warn is used twice with regard to Israel’s fathers at the time of the Exodus. The verb *shakam* or to rise early is used again which suggests that the Lord get up well before Israel and engages them in this warning. What he wants above all else is for them to obey or *shamah* (to hear, cf. Neh 9.17) literally “in (*b-*) his voice” or *qol* (cf. Jos 5.6).

Jer 31.32: not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord.

An extended sentence which begins in the previous verse where the Lord says that he will be making a new covenant, *beryth* and the verb *karath* which means to cut. In the first the Lord not just takes Israel from Egypt but does so by the hand. This evokes a husband-wife image since he identifies himself as a spouse. Nevertheless, Israel broke that covenant, *parar* not just to break but to break into pieces as well as to make void.

Jer 42.17: All the men who set their faces to go to Egypt to live there shall die by the sword, by famine and by pestilence; they shall have no remnant or survivor from the evil which I will bring upon them. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: As my anger and my wrath were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so my wrath will be poured out on you when you go to Egypt. You shall become an execration, a horror, a curse and a taunt. You shall see this place no

more. Jer 42.19: The Lord has said to you, O remnant of Judah, “Do not go to Egypt.” Know for a certainty that I have warned you this day.

This and the next two verses follow consecutively, the current one dealing with those who wish to return to Egypt, having no idea what’s in store for them there. The reason for such flight is the king of Babylon who is threatening Israel. The text puts it vividly as “set their faces,” the verb *sum* suggesting not swerving from their intent. This unmovable *sum* means that the Lord will not allow anyone to escape the evil (*rah*, cf. 2Chron 7.22) he’ll bring upon them.

Vs. 18 reveals the intensity of the Lord’s feeling toward Israel which seems set on returning to Egypt. Again, the current generation has lost all memory of what had motivated the Lord to bring them from there. Perhaps their current fear lulled them into thinking that the Babylonians would not invade that country.

This divine intensity is revealed by the nouns *’aph* (cf. Ex 32.11), *chemah* and the verb *natak* (anger, wrath and to pour out, also as to flow or to melt). The result? Israel will become an execration, horror, curse and taunt. All four words are prefaced with the preposition *l-* or “to” which serves to reflect how strongly the Lord feels about all this.

The three verses which are in succession culminate here in vs. 19 with the Lord issuing a warning to the remnant of Judah, *she’eryth* or survivors intimating that the Babylonians had captured their land. This makes their desire to go to Egypt all the more compelling. However, the Lord foresees the possibility of the Babylonians invading that country. The verb *yadah* (cf. Ps 81.5) or to know is used twice to convey the severity of the Lord’s warning, *hod* (cf. Jer 7.11) coupled with “this day” meaning the warning is issued with great urgency.

Jer 44.12: I will take the remnant of Judah who have set their faces to come to the land of Egypt to live, and they shall all be consumed; in the land of Egypt they shall fall; by the sword and by famine they shall be consumed; from the least to the greatest, they shall die by the sword and by famine; and they shall become an execration, a horror, a curse, and a taunt.

Another mention of *she’eryth* or remnant (cf. Jer 42.19), this time similar to what’s recounted in Jer 42.17, *sum* or to set in the sense of make permanent their faces to come to Egypt. Again, this applies to their coming, not actually being there which means they have a chance to change their minds. If they go through with this, they will be put to death and become as in Jer 42.18 a fourfold abomination.

Jer 44.13-14: I will punish those who dwell in the land of Egypt as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence 14) so that none of the remnant of Judah who have come to live in the land of Egypt shall escape or survive or return to the land of Judah, to which they desire to return to dwell there; for they shall not return except some fugitives.

Two verses which are combined because both refer to Egypt and form one extended sentence. As noted with regard to some of these verses from Jeremiah, those in Israel were tempted sorely to go

to Egypt. What we have here is that some of the remnant or *she'eryth* did make the journey but won't escape punishment, *paqad* (cf. Jos 24.32) being the verb which has military connotations such as mustering. Similarly, they won't be able to make the return trip home. The only exceptions are fugitives from among the *she'eryth* or *paley*, one who has fled. Perhaps they will escape by reason of their past experiences of getting away undetected.

Ezk 16.26: You also played the harlot with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, multiplying your harlotry to provoke me to anger.

Zanah or to practice harlotry and *taznuth*, harlotry refer to prostitution with the Egyptians described literally and vividly as "being great of flesh." No small wonder the Israelites had wanted to return to Egypt, but it ends up by angering the Lord, *kahas* (cf. 2Kg 21.15).

Ezk 20.7-8: And I said to them, "Cast away the detestable things your eyes feast on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the Lord your God." But they rebelled against me and would not listen to me; they did not every man cast away the detestable things their eyes feasted on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. "Then I thought I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt."

Because two verses follow each other, they are combined here. The opening words beginning vs. 7 have the conjunctive *v-* carry over the content of the previous verse or the Lord saying that he will bring Israel from Egypt to a land flowing with milk and honey. In preparation for that, Israel is to cast away detestable things, *shalach* (cf. Jer 7.25) and *shiquts* also as anything impure or abominable. Note how it's described, that the people's eyes feast on it which is lacking in the Hebrew text. This guarding of one's vision is essential so as not to become defiled with the idols of Egypt, *tame'* and *gilulyim* which fundamentally mean logs or blocks as of wood. To drive home this point, God adds that he is their Lord.

Vs. 8 begins with the conjunctive *v-* translated as "but" to show the contrast with what the Lord wishes of the Israelites. *Marah* and the negative of *shamah* (to rebel and not to listen) are pretty much the same (cf. Ps 106.7 and Jer 11.7 respectively), conforming with what the Lord forbade in vs. 7. Then note that the Lord says to himself that he won't spend his anger against them, *shaphak* and *chemah* (cf. Jer 42.18), that is, he won't do this in the midst (*tok* prefaced with *b-*) of land of Egypt. I.e., in vs. 9 the Lord figures it's best not to profane his name before other nations but nations specified as those in whom the Israelites had dwelt.

Ezk 20.10: So I led them out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness.

"So" is the conjunctive *v-*, this playing an important role in these verses as has been noted because the action is fast-paced and events closely connected. The way it's used here reveals a kind of acceptance and resignation to the fact that Israel will continue to have a rebellious spirit but still is worth delivering from Egypt.

Ezk 20.36: As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, says the Lord God.

K- and *ken* or “so-as” are the hinges upon which this verse swings. Both deal with entering into judgment or *shaphat* (cf. Ex 6.6), each at two different times which here are rendered as one and the same.

Dan 9.15: And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and has made you a name as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

Daniel sees a parallel between when the Lord had rescued Israel from Egypt and the present day, Israel being held captive in Babylon. However, like Egypt, many if not most Israelites managed to carve out a relatively comfortable life in their captive nation which infers the Babylonians have a fairly general toleration of peoples other than their own. Daniel is admitted to the Lord on behalf of all the people that they (i.e., ‘we’) have sinned and acted in a wicked fashion, *rashah* also connoting to be guilty.

Hos 8.13: They love sacrifice; they sacrifice flesh and eat it; but the Lord has no delight in them. Now he will remember their iniquity and punish their sins; they shall return to Egypt.

The Lord applies the verb *’ahav* (cf. Deut 4.37; to love, to long after) to alien sacrifices in which the Lord takes no delight, *ratsah* also to be well pleased which is more to the point. The key word here is *hatah* (cf. Jos 24.14) or “now” which introduces the second sentence. It shows that the Lord has made the decision to let his people return to Egypt, something earlier excerpts had noted. However, before allowing that, the Lord will do the following two which will make the people regret their decision and feel hopelessly trapped:

-*zakar* -> *havon* or remember -> iniquity (cf. Ps 106.7 for the first)

-*paqad* -> *chata’th* or punish -> sin (cf. Jer 44.13-14 for the first)

Hos 11.5: They shall return to the land of Egypt, and Assyria shall be their king because they have refused to return to me.

A two-fold whammy, if you will: first Egypt and then Assyria which will conquer that country. Two uses of the verb *shuv* or to return: Egypt and (not) the Lord.

Hos 13.4: I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt; you know no God but me, and besides me there is no savior.

Despite Israel wanting to return to Egypt as well as the Lord wanting to send them there, this verse resolves the two. The Lord says that he was present in no way different from that land which as he is in the present. I.e., there is no time gap when it comes to things divine. Despite Israel’s rebellious nature, the people admit to knowing (*yadah*, cf. Jer 42.19) God, he being their savior or the participle *yashah* (cf. Ps 106.21).

Note two key words indicative of divine transcendence as presented here, *zulah* and *bilty* or besides, except that and also as beside, an adverb of negation.

Amos 4.10: I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt; I slew your young men with the sword; I carried away your horses; and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils; yet you did not return to me," says the Lord.

Once again a parallel between the present dreadful state of affairs and Egypt, the latter being an archetype of all future negative experiences in Israel. Her experience there is now the standard by which they are all measured. Also once again is the verb *shuv* (cf. Hos 11.5) as not to return to the Lord.

**Amos 9.7: "Are you not like the Ethiopians to me, O people of Israel?" says the Lord.
"Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir?"**

Likening Israel to the Ethiopians as well as throwing in the Philistines shows that the Lord considers his people like any other by reason of her rebellious nature.

+