

# PART THREE: ISRAEL'S EARLY HISTORY

## CHAPTER 6: KEY THEOLOGICAL MOTIFS FOR ISRAEL'S EARLY HISTORY

### A) MOSES, DEUTERONOMY, AND THE FORMAL ESTABLISHMENT OF GOD'S KINGDOM

#### 1) THE ANCIENT TREATIES

Archaeology has revealed much about ancient treaties. A total of 57 early treaties have been found.<sup>1</sup> Much of the modern discussion began in the 1920's and 1930's when archaeologists found international treaties at the Hittite capital in eastern Anatolia. These treaties were written between 1450 BC and 1200 BC.<sup>2</sup> So they were written from the time of Moses to half way through Israel's period of the Judges. Viktor Korošec identified suzerainty treaties among these texts, and Mendenhall noted the similarities between these texts and portions of Exodus and Deuteronomy. The treaties followed a general pattern comprised of: an introduction, a historical prologue, a list of basic stipulations, a long list of specific stipulations, a list of blessings and curses, a list of witnesses to the treaty, and specific instructions for preserving the treaty documents and passing them on to the next generation. This pattern was somewhat flexible. Not all treaties contained every treaty element, though treaties from the Mosaic Age tended to follow this pattern rather closely.

It is not clear how long before the Mosaic Age the formal treaty pattern began to be used to write international treaties. Few treaty texts have survived from before the Mosaic Age, even though international treaties are mentioned in ancient texts from as early as the Old Sumerian period.<sup>3</sup> Dennis McCarthy argued that treaties were known from the beginning of Sumerian culture in Mesopotamia in a form that resembled later treaties. McCarthy noted that the earliest surviving treaty was written in Sumerian on the Vulture Stela. It recorded a treaty between Lagash and Umma. While the stela is badly damaged, part of it clearly did record the historical events of the two parties of the treaty. This historical perspective served the same function as the historical prologue of the Hittite treaties. The treaty also included the establishment of an obligation on the part of the defeated nation, and threatened curses for violating the obligation. Most treaties written before the Mosaic Age included the same general features as the Hittite treaties, but in a far looser and more informal way.

McCarthy noted that there was also a fragmentary third millennium BC vassal treaty between the kings of Elam and Akkad. The treaty involved an oath, blessings, curses, and an invocation of the gods.<sup>4</sup> There were also a wide variety of second and first millennium international treaties. Several of these have

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For a discussion of the treaties see John H. Walton, *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), 95-109.

Mendenhall noted that the treaty form was the common property of the ancient Near East, and that it could be traced back ultimately to Mesopotamian roots. George Mendenhall, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, (Pittsburgh: The Biblical Colloquium, 1955), 27. Cleon L. Rogers Jr., "The Covenant with Moses and its Historical Setting," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 14 (1971): 141-55.

The basic legal idea of a contract in international relations goes back to Mesopotamia. Dennis J. McCarthy "Covenant in the Old Testament: The Present State of Inquiry," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 27 (1965): 227.

McCarthy, Dennis J. *Treaty and Covenant: A Study in Form in the Ancient Oriental Documents and in the Old Testament*, (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963).

been preserved.<sup>5</sup> The Mari texts from the 18th century BC demonstrate that the essential features of the international treaties were in use in a less formal way at Mari.<sup>6</sup>

Two decades after Korošec discussed the Hittite treaties, George Mendenhall wrote about them. Mendenhall argued that the Hittite treaties inherited their basic concepts from earlier sources, and that the treaty concepts were the common property of the ancient Near East. Mendenhall then pointed out the similarity between these treaty concepts and several Biblical passages. Mendenhall noted that there was no clear line between religious obligations and legal obligations in the ancient Near East, but that it was possible to distinguish the source of different obligations. He argued that the Ten Commandments were the legal basis that bound together the tribes that came out of Egypt.<sup>7</sup> Mendenhall argued that covenants were guaranteed by specific deities, and the deities punished those who broke the treaties. Mendenhall argued that the Ten Commandments became the basis for the laws of Exodus. He further argued that both the Decalogue and the specific treaty stipulations of the Covenant Code in Exodus 21-23 resembled the stipulations of the Hittite treaties published by Korošec.<sup>8</sup> The heart of Mendenhall's position was that the covenant in Exodus had rather informal similarities both to the Hittite vassal treaties and to the vassal treaty traditions throughout the ancient Near East. Mendenhall then argued that the treaty reflected in Exodus developed eventually into the book of Deuteronomy in Josiah's day. Mendenhall's suggestion represented the beginning of a departure from the Documentary Hypothesis developed by men like Julius Wellhausen. Liberal critical scholarship before Mendenhall had taught that the covenant motif was a very late addition to the Old Testament. Mendenhall suggested that covenant concepts had been a part of Israel's religious and civil life from its beginning. Mendenhall set off a huge academic debate that raged for

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The texts for these treaties are widely available. Parts of three treaties appear in Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*. Most of the Hittite treaties were published by Weidner and Friedrich. Dennis McCarthy also published a variety of the texts in *Treaty and Covenant*.

<sup>7</sup> Munn-Rankin, J. M. "Diplomacy in Western Asia in the Early Second Millennium B.C.," *Iraq* 17 (1955): 68-110.

<sup>8</sup> Mendenhall, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, 5.

Klaus Baltzer also argued that elements of the treaty pattern appear in Ex. 19-34. Baltzer noted that Ex. 19:3-8 traced Israel's history from the Exodus to Mount Sinai like a historical prologue. He noted that Ex. 19:5-6 resembled the basic stipulations of the treaty. Ex. 19:7-8 resembled the ceremony by which a covenant or treaty was ratified. Baltzer argued that Ex. 24 also functioned like a treaty ratification ceremony. Klaus Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary in Old Testament, Jewish, and Early Christian Writings*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 27-31.

three decades.<sup>9</sup> A vast number of books and articles were published on the implications of the international treaty form for Old Testament interpretation.

## 2) MOSES AND SECOND MILLENNIUM TREATIES

When Moses wrote the Exodus text, he included in it features drawn from the international treaty pattern that he had learned as a youth in Hatshepsut's court. Near the end of his life, Moses drew on that pattern once more. Now the Holy Spirit inspired him to write a formal treaty that would bind Israel to Yahweh as the nation's sovereign king.<sup>10</sup> This formal treaty gave its shape to the book of Deuteronomy. Moses' last book received its structure from the international treaty pattern.<sup>11</sup> At the end of Israel's

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Nadav Na'aman, "The Historical Introduction to the Aleppo Treaty Reconsidered," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 32 (1980): 34-42. George Mendenhall, "Ancient Oriental and Biblical Law," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 17 (1954): 26. Mendenhall set off a revolution in Old Testament studies. Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis had assumed that the idea of a "covenant" was very late and of little importance. Robert A. Oden, Jr. "The Place of Covenant in the Religion of Israel," 429-47 in Patrick D. Miller, Jr. et al, eds. *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 429. For three decades, most critical Old Testament scholars began to see the idea of "covenant" or "treaty" as an ancient idea that had been at the heart of Israel's faith. A surprising number of books and articles were published that traced the implications of the treaty form for Old Testament studies. Within the critical world, Walther Eichrodt's study of covenant theology was translated, and it became an important part of the debate. Eichrodt's book was written in 1933. So it did not directly pay a part in the debate about the international treaty form. However, the treaty discussion gave contemporary significance to Eichrodt's work. Walter Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972). Klaus Baltzer published a detailed survey of Old Testament passages related to the treaty motif. Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary in Old Testament, Jewish, and Early Christian Writings*, 27-31. Ernest W. Nicholson discussed at length the exegetical implications of the treaty pattern. Nicholson assumed the accuracy of the Documentary Hypothesis. As such, he assumed that Deuteronomy was written during Josiah's reign. He also agreed with authors like Cassuto who claimed that Deuteronomy incorporated earlier material into its final form. Nicholson disagreed with the way that Mendenhall had used the treaty material. Mendenhall had argued for a very early influence of the treaty material. Nicholson believed that Deuteronomy developed overtime. He believed that the treaty material only had an impact on the book at a later stage in its development. Ernest W. Nicholson, *God and His People: Covenant and Theology in the Old Testament*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 60. Ernest W. Nicholson, *Deuteronomy and Tradition*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 8, 43-7. Anthony Phillips, "A Fresh Look at the Sinai Pericope," *Vetus Testamentum* 34 (1984): 39-43.

The treaty discussion took a different turn when evangelical authors like K. A. Kitchen and Meredith Kline argued that the book of Deuteronomy resembled 2nd millennium BC international treaties more closely than 7th century Assyrian treaties. They noted that the later Assyrian treaties lacked a historical prologue and contained only curses without blessings. They argued that Deuteronomy should be dated in the 2nd millennium BC when the kind of treaty pattern reflected in the book was in use. This struck Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis at its roots since the hypothesis was based on a 7th century BC date for Deuteronomy. Meredith G. Kline, *Treaty of the Great King: The Covenant Structure of Deuteronomy*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1963). The critical world responded in several ways. Some authors argued that Deuteronomy did resemble Assyrian treaties. Moshe Weinfeld, "Traces of Assyrian Treaty Formulae in Deuteronomy," *Biblica* 46 (1965): 417-27. R. Frankena, "The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon and the Dating of Deuteronomy," *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 14 (1965): 122-54. Other authors like H. J. Kraus began to rethink the analogy between Israel's covenant and the treaty form. McCarthy, "Covenant in the Old Testament," 224-25. The treaty parallel has largely disappeared over the mental horizon in the critical world, and only a few critical authors have discussed the topic in recent years. An exception would be Menahem Haran, "The Berit 'Covenant': Its Nature and Ceremonial Background," 203-19 in Mordechai Cogan, et al, eds. Tehillah le-Moshe: *Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg*, (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1997). Conservatives continue to stress the treaty parallel as an argument for the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.

The relationship between the international treaty form and Israel's covenant can be seen in a few Egyptian texts from the 19th and 20th Dynasties. These texts contained a non-Egyptian word *brt*. This was the same word that appeared in Hebrew as "covenant." In the Egyptian texts, the word *brt* was used in two contexts. It was used to describe Libyans who agreed together to submit to Egyptian rule. It was also used to describe people who paid tribute to Egypt as vassals. The word *brt* also appeared at Ugarit from the 14th and 13th centuries BC where *el brt*, the god of the covenant, was praised. K. A. Kitchen, "Egypt, Ugarit, Qatna and Covenant," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 11 (1980): 453-65.

A 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century BC date for Deuteronomy is the heart of Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis. Not surprisingly, evidence has been sought to defend a late date for the book. Ronald Hendel argued against Kitchen's book *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* by noting that curse formulas in Deuteronomy resembled curse formulas in the Assyrian treaties. He also argued that the Hebrew used in Deuteronomy was the kind of Hebrew used in the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century BC

wilderness journey, Moses held a formal treaty ratification ceremony to create Israel officially as a people and nation serving Yahweh their king.

When Moses had led Israel from Egypt, the community had been a largely disorganized and chaotic mob. At the exodus, Israel had been only loosely organized under the leadership of tribal elders. Israel had also been accompanied by a mixed rabble of gentiles who had been only loosely associated with Israel and her God.<sup>12</sup> It took Moses forty years in the wilderness to weld the tribes into a nation. One of the greatest transitions in Old Testament history occurred at the end of Israel's wilderness sojourn when Moses declared in Deuteronomy 29:10-13,

You are standing today, all of you, before Yahweh your God: your chiefs, your tribes, your elders and your officials, every man of Israel, your children, your wives, and your sojourner who is within your camps, from the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water, to cut (or form) a covenant of Yahweh your God, and His oath which Yahweh your God is cutting (or forming) with you today, in order that He may establish you today as His people and that He Himself may be your God, just as He said to you and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

With these words, Israel was established as a vassal nation under Yahweh's sovereignty. Israel became in a real sense the kingdom of God on earth. As such, they served a somewhat parallel to Eden. They had walked with God through the wilderness as they had stood beneath the pillar of cloud and fire. Now they became His kingdom. The Israelites would retain this role only so long as they remained faithful to their covenant and treaty with God. Moses established Israel as Yahweh's vassal by holding a covenant formation ceremony and bringing Israel into a formal vassal treaty with God. To do so, Moses wrote the book of Deuteronomy and acted out the events recorded in it. Deuteronomy was structured according to the pattern used in the 2nd millennium BC international treaties. Moses had learned the rules for writing

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rather than the kind of West Semitic used in the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. Kitchen responded that the Biblical text was updated linguistically as it was copied. Kitchen argued that such updating was common in the ancient Near East. Ronald S. Hendel, William W. Hallo, and Kenneth A. Kitchen, "The Kitchen Debate," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 31 (2005): 48-53. Hendel pointed to a significant problem. Texts like Egypt's Amarna Letters transliterated West Semitic words into hieroglyphic. The hieroglyphic reading can then be used to understand how the West Semitic words were pronounced. During the Amarna Age, Canaanite nouns were still being written with case endings. By the 19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, Canaanite nouns were only being written inconsistently with case endings. For a discussion of this grammatical shift, see William F. Albright, *The Vocalization of the Egyptian Syllabic Orthography*, (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1934), 19. The Hebrew used in the Pentateuch lacked case endings. This is a rather good argument that the whole Pentateuch was written in a more recent form of the language than the form in use in the Mosaic Age. Kitchen's claim that the Biblical text was updated has merit. In some cases, such an updating of the Biblical text can possibly be demonstrated. Without it, how could Moses see the land as far as Dan in Deut. 34:1? A better example of updating may be Gen. 14:14. This verse claimed that Abram pursued Chedorlaomer as far as Dan. While the city of Laish (Dan) was occupied during Abraham's day, it is hard to understand how Moses could have used the name Dan as a geographical term. Moses died before any of Israel's tribes received their land inheritance. The debate over possible dates for the use of Biblical Hebrew may be at least partly an argument from silence. Other than the Pentateuch and Joshua, inscriptions in mid-2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC Hebrew have not survived. For the earliest texts, see A. R. Millard, "The Practice of Writing in Ancient Israel," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 35 (1972): 98-111. Aaron Demsky, "A Proto-Canaanite ABECEDARY Dating from the Period of the Judges and its Implications for the History of the Alphabet," *Tel Aviv* 4 (1977): 14-27. Whether Hebrew existed as a written West Semitic language distinct from Canaanite in the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC is unknown. The problem may also be overstated. Case endings were often vowels which would not have been written anyway. In the Mosaic Age, West Semitic languages only wrote consonants, not vowels. Three consonants eventually began to be used also as vowels but only much later than Moses' time. The current system of vowel points was only added to the text in the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. An example of Semitic case endings can be seen in East Semitic (Akkadian) texts found at Ugarit before 1200 BC. The word "gift" was written in East Semitic in the nominative case as *ni-id-nu*. The genitive form of the word was *i-na-di-ni*, and the accusative form was *ni-id-na*. John Huehnergard, *The Akkadian of Ugarit*, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 143. The differences between these forms may or may not have affected the way that they were written in Hebrew. Of course, East Semitic and West Semitic were already quite different languages by this time.

In his northern campaigns, Thutmose III had seized approximately 7,300 captives and had brought them to Egypt as slaves. At least some of these may have accompanied the Israelites in the exodus. If so, they may have brought with them a commitment to the Canaanite gods.

such vassal treaties when he was educated in the Egyptian court. Stephen noted in Acts 7:22 that Moses had been educated in all the learning and wisdom of the Egyptians.<sup>13</sup>

From an evangelical perspective, one of the better studies of the treaty form in Deuteronomy was Meredith Kline's book *Treaty of the Great King*. Kline argued that the structure of Deuteronomy followed exactly the structure of the international treaties in use in the early 2nd millennium BC. Yet Deuteronomy differed strongly from the Assyrian treaties in Josiah's day when liberal critical scholarship has dated the origin of the book.<sup>14</sup> If true, Deuteronomy was probably written in the Mosaic Age rather than in the 7th century BC when Josiah lived.<sup>15</sup> This is a very important issue because the critical Documentary Hypothesis pivots around dating the origin of Deuteronomy in Josiah's day. If Deuteronomy can be dated in the Mosaic Age, the Documentary Hypothesis can not be sustained.

The definitive example of the treaty pattern in the Old Testament can be seen in the book of Deuteronomy.<sup>16</sup> Meredith Kline traced how Deuteronomy resembled the treaty pattern. He argued that the structure of Deuteronomy should be understood as a formal treaty. He suggested that the book consisted of: 1) Deuteronomy 1:1-5, the treaty preamble, 2) Deuteronomy 1:6-4:49, the treaty historical prologue, 3) Deuteronomy 5:1-26:19, the treaty stipulations, 4) Deuteronomy 27:1-30:20, the treaty sanctions, and 5) Deuteronomy 31:1-34:12, the provisions for dynastic disposition of the treaty.

Deuteronomy 1:1-5 constituted the treaty preamble. This was a standard treaty feature in the ancient Near East. The treaties began with a brief statement by the sovereign king identifying himself. In Deuteronomy, Moses identified himself as the earthly representative of the heavenly king. The preamble also noted where Israel was located when the treaty was formed.

Deuteronomy 1:6-4:49 constituted the treaty historical prologue. The purpose of the treaty's historical prologue was to summarize past relations between the sovereign king and vassal state. This historical prologue stressed what the sovereign had done for the vassal in the past, and why the vassal should obey the sovereign. In Deuteronomy, the historical prologue began at Sinai and traced how God had led Israel through the wilderness. Moses stressed that God had kept His covenant faithfulness throughout the wilderness journey while Israel had been consistently rebellious and unfaithful. The simple fact that Yahweh was willing to renew His covenant with a rebellious nation proved how great God was. The historical prologue traced how Israel traveled through the wilderness toward the Promised Land. It described how God carried them past the Moabites and Ammonites to conquer Transjordan.

Deuteronomy 5:1-16:19 contained the stipulations, or laws, of the treaty. These stipulations state exactly how Israel should act to remain in the treaty. The stipulations began Deuteronomy 5:1-11:32 with a general statement of principles, and then went on to specific examples of how these principles should be expressed in practice. Deuteronomy 5 began by repeating the Ten Commandments as the basic principles of the treaty. Then Deuteronomy 6:4-5 included the most basic stipulation of all. It required Israel to love God with all of their heart and soul. The basic and general stipulations of the treaty included God's command to teach obedience to the following generations, God's command to remember His law in all aspects of life, God's command to worship only Him, and God's command to avoid the sins of the surrounding nations.

The section of basic stipulations was followed in Deuteronomy 12:1-26:19 by a section that Kline called "ancillary commandments." These ancillary commandments decreed how the general principles of

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Moses first used elements of this treaty pattern when he wrote the book of Exodus for the wilderness community. Baltzer argued that elements of the treaty pattern are contained in Ex. 19-34. Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary in Old Testament, Jewish, and Early Christian Writings*, 27-31.

<sup>14</sup> The Assyrians were brutal people. Their treaties had no blessings and no historical prologue.

<sup>15</sup> This argument has become very popular in the evangelical world. For example, Kenneth A. Kitchen made the same argument forcefully at the annual S.B.L. conference in Washington D.C. If true, Moses would presumably have learned the treaty form during his early education in Egypt's royal court. For an example of an Assyrian treaty, see: D. J. Wiseman, "The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon," *Iraq* 20. (1958), Part I.

<sup>16</sup> After Genesis, most of the treaty material in the Pentateuch appeared in either Exodus or Deuteronomy. These two books are more clearly formal treaty documents than Leviticus or Numbers. As formal vassal treaty documents, sections of these books follow the common pattern for 2nd millennium BC treaties in the ancient Near East. These included a preamble, historical prologue, stipulations, blessings and curses, witnesses, and provisions for passing on the treaty to future generations. Na'aman, "The Historical Introduction of the Aleppo Treaty Reconsidered," 34f. Stanley Gevirtz, "West-Semitic Curses and the Problem of the Origins of Hebrew Law," *Vetus Testamentum* 11 (1961): 137-58.

the treaty should be expressed in specific situations. They included laws that organized Israel's civil government and public worship. The laws explained how justice could be preserved, and listed the responsibilities of kings, priests, judges and prophets. The laws explained in specific detail how to live as a community within God's treaty.

Deuteronomy 27:1-30:20 indicated the blessings and curses that would result from either keeping or violating God's treaty with the nation. These blessings and curses were to be spoken antiphonally by the Israelites from Mounts Ebal and Gerizim after entering the Promised Land. Deuteronomy then looked far in the future and predicted how future generations would experience blessings and curses based on their response to God's covenant treaty.

Deuteronomy 31:1-34:12 concluded the treaty by spelling out how the treaty would be handed down to future generations, and how the treaty document would be preserved. This section also specified the witnesses to the treaty. In Deuteronomy 30:19-20, Moses also called heaven and earth to serve as treaty witnesses. In Deuteronomy 31:19, Moses' song was also used as a witness to Israel's vassal treaty with God.

There can be little doubt that the structure of Deuteronomy as a whole was influenced by the treaty pattern. Scholars of almost every theological perspective agree on that basic fact, despite their other disagreements about the book. G. Ernest Wright argued that the Song of Moses Deuteronomy 32 followed the treaty pattern by adding the pattern of a treaty lawsuit.<sup>17</sup> Wright suggests that Deuteronomy 32:1-6 introduced the lawsuit by calling heaven and earth to court. This section also declared Yahweh's faithfulness and Israel's lack of treaty faithfulness. Deuteronomy 32:7-14 declares God's mighty acts. Deuteronomy 32:15-18 gave God's indictment against His people. Deuteronomy 32:19-29 declared God's sentence against His people. Wright suggested that the rest of the chapter turned to a promise of future salvation for Israel.

Liberal critical scholarship has answered this attack on the Documentary Hypothesis in a number of ways. Gerhard von Rad suggested that the 2nd millennium BC treaty pattern may have been preserved within the believing community down to Josiah's time. Another approach has been to argue that Deuteronomy could only have been written after the Assyrian empire had come to an end. Then Josiah intentionally turned back to an earlier day to explain who the Israelites were. Yet both of these suggestions almost require some kind of written continuity within the community, and the Documentary Hypothesis assumes that such a written tradition did not exist.

By far the most common approach has been to gloss over the differences and argue that Deuteronomy really does resemble an Assyrian treaty after all.<sup>18</sup> A good example of this approach can be seen in Moshe Weinfeld's article, "Traces of Assyrian Treaty Formulae in Deuteronomy."<sup>19</sup> The Assyrian treaties stressed treaty curses very strongly. Weinfeld argued that the Assyrian vassal treaty of Esarhaddon often used curses which sounded much like the curses of Deuteronomy 28. For example, he compared Deuteronomy 28:23 with the vassal treaty of Esarhaddon lines 528-53. The Esarhaddon treaty threatened that the gods would make the vassal's ground like iron so that it could not be plowed. The rain would not fall, and the sky would look like brass. This is the same idea as the treaty curse in Deuteronomy 28:23, although the wording is quite different. Weinfeld also compared Deuteronomy 28:30 to the vassal treaty of Esarhaddon lines 428-429. The Esarhaddon treaty threatened the vassal that Venus would make the vassal's wives lie in his enemies' lap while he looked on. This resembles Deuteronomy 28:30, although it is also different in quite significant ways. Deuteronomy says nothing about the planet Venus. Deuteronomy talks about being engaged to one woman, while the Esarhaddon treaty mentions multiple wives.

Weinfeld then noted that the order in which the treaty curses appeared in the Esarhaddon treaty was determined by the nature of the Assyrian pantheon, and that the treaty curses in Deuteronomy followed the same order. Weinfeld argued that the order in which the curses appeared in Deuteronomy required that Deuteronomy be based on the Assyrian treaties. The weakness with Weinfeld's position is that treaty curses were rather stylized and predictable in the ancient Near East. Loose similarities between

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Wright claims that the Song of Moses was written in the 11th century BC. Wright, G. Ernest, "The Lawsuit of God: A Form-Critical Study of Deuteronomy 32," 26-67 in Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson, eds. *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962).

<sup>18</sup> Frankena, "The Vassal-Treaties of Esarhaddon and the Dating of Deuteronomy," 122-54.

<sup>19</sup> Weinfeld, "Traces of Assyrian Treaty Formulae in Deuteronomy," 417-27.

the Esarhaddon treaty and Deuteronomy do not at all prove that Deuteronomy was based on the Esarhaddon treaty. It is more likely that both Deuteronomy and the Esarhaddon treaty reflected the broad and ancient tradition of treaty curses in the Near East.

### 3) TREATY VOCABULARY AND LAWSUITS

The international treaties often used common words in a unique way. There has been an ongoing academic discussion about the significance of these common words when they were used in a technical way as treaty or covenant terms. Two of the most important treaty words in the ancient Near East were "love" and "hate." People who were loyal to a sovereign overlord were described as "loving" him. Those who rebelled against him were described as "hating" him. The words "love" and "hate" in this context did not primarily describe an emotion. Vassal rulers would continue to "love" their sovereign so long as they kept the terms of the treaty. What they may have felt emotionally was rather unimportant. They could have liked or disliked the sovereign. They could have trusted or feared him. They "loved" the sovereign so long as they obeyed the terms of their treaty. It is, of course, impossible to separate emotion and behavior completely. Vassal rulers who liked and trusted their sovereign overlords were far more likely to remain loyal to them than vassal rulers who feared and despised their kings. Yet the bottom line issue was not emotion. It was obedience.<sup>20</sup>

The treaty terms "love" and "hate" appeared often in ancient Near Eastern literature. Moran noted that texts from the 18th to the 7th centuries BC used the word "love" to describe the loyalty and friendship between allies, sovereigns, and vassals. Moran gave as an example a letter written to king Yasma'Addu of Mari. In the letter, the king declared his "love" for the king of Mari. Moran noted that by Egypt's Amarna period, the word "love" had beyond any question entered the terminology of international relations. The word "love" appeared several times in the Amarna Letters to describe the treaty relationship between equal rulers as well as the treaty relationship between vassals and their sovereigns. Egypt's Amarna Letters were written from Canaanite city states to Akhenaten's new capital at Amarna. They were written a generation after Joshua's conquest of Palestine, and they record the ongoing struggle between the Israelites and Egypt's vassals in Palestine.<sup>21</sup> In EA 286:18-20, the king of Jerusalem even asked Pharaoh why he "loved" the Hebrews and "hated" his own vassals in Palestine. McKenzie and Wallace argued that these words were used in a treaty sense. They interpreted the king's argument as saying that Pharaoh should act as if he had a treaty with Jerusalem instead of acting as if he had a treaty with the Habiru.<sup>22</sup> Moran noted that the word "love" continued to be used in this technical way in the 1st millennium BC. He noted the Assyrian king Esarhaddon's warning to his vassals that they must "love" his son Ashurbanipal just as they had "loved" him.<sup>23</sup>

Moses used treaty terms and concepts as he wrote the Pentateuch. Moses used both "loving" and "hating" in a technical way.<sup>24</sup> In Exodus 20:5-6, Moses noted God's decree that He would visit their iniquity to the 3rd and 4th generation of those who "hated" him. At the same time, He would show mercy to thousands who "loved" him and kept His commandments. In Deuteronomy 32:41, Moses wrote that the Divine Warrior announced His vengeance against those who "hated" Him. "Hating" God was violating His covenant, while "loving" God was keeping His commandments. The technical treaty meaning of "love" and "hate" can also be seen in Deuteronomy 1:27, 11:22, 30:6-9 and 30:19-20. In Deuteronomy 1:27, the Israelites suggested that Yahweh may have brought them into the wilderness to destroy them because he "hated" them. In Deuteronomy 11:22, Moses commanded Israel to "love" Yahweh and to walk in His ways. In Deuteronomy 30, Moses promised that God would circumcise their hearts to "love" the Lord with all

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In the ancient texts, kings did frequently claim to obey the terms of a treaty because they loved life. Violation of the treaty would lead to their deaths. Munn-Rankin, "Diplomacy in Western Asia," 94.

William L. Moran, "The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 25 (1963): 77-87.

<sup>22</sup> Steven L. McKenzie and Howard N. Wallace, "Covenant Themes in Malachi," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 45 (1983): 556.

Michael Fishbane, "The Treaty Background of Amos 1:11 and Related Matters," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 89 (1970): 313-18.

<sup>24</sup> On "hating," see Norbert Lohfink, "Hate and Love in Osee 9,15," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 25 (1963): 417.

their hearts so that they may "live." Then they would obey the Lord, and the Lord would rejoice over them for "good."

"Love" and "hate" were not the only words used in a technical way related to the international treaty form. In treaty documents from the ancient Near East, the words "know," "good," and "evil" were also closely tied to a proper covenant relationship. "Know" was used as a treaty term in Egypt during the Mosaic Age. It can be seen in several New Kingdom texts. The 18th Dynasty ruler Amenhotep II noted that "the country which knew not Egypt beseeched the good god." The "good god" in this passage was Pharaoh. It was impossible that any nation in the ancient East could be unaware of either Egypt or its ruler. "Know" here clearly referred to a formal relationship of some kind. The word had this meaning also in a 19th Dynasty text from Karnak that was written by Pharaoh Seti I. This text spoke about captives from "countries that knew not Egypt."<sup>25</sup> Frank Seilhamer also discussed the technical use of the word "know" in Exodus 33:12.<sup>26</sup>

Moses used the word "good" with a technical treaty meaning in Deuteronomy 30:9. This verse promised that Yahweh would rejoice over Israel for "good" just as He had rejoiced over their fathers. To receive the "good" things of the covenant, they only had to obey. A similar technical treaty use may stand behind Exodus 18:9, Numbers and 10:29. The word "good" also appeared in the international treaties in the same contexts. The things of the treaty were "good." Life within the treaty was "good." Life within the covenant treaty made everything "good." Life outside of the covenant was consistently "evil." Hoffmeier noted examples where the word "good" was used as a synonym for "treaty" or "alliance" in a variety of Amarna Letters from the Egyptian 18th Dynasty.<sup>27</sup>

The word "live" was used in the same contexts as the word "love." People who obeyed the high king's treaty stipulations were described as "living" before him. They "lived" because they remained within the covenant or treaty. They obeyed the high king and served no one else. On the other hand, vassal rulers who left the treaty and violated the covenants stipulations were described as being "dead" before the high king. They were "dead" even though they remained alive physically and continued to rule their own cities. They were "dead" in their relationship to the sovereign. Some vassal kings in the ancient Near East went from being "alive" before the sovereign king, to being "dead." When they returned to a proper relationship with the high king, they became once more "alive" before him.

J. Wijngaards noted several interesting examples of this. He noted a vassal treaty between the Hittite king Mursilis II and Manapa Dattas. Mursilis II wrote in the historical prologue about how prince Manapa Dattas had been killed by his brothers and had been driven from the land when he should have been placed on the throne. In another treaty, Mursilis II wrote that the same thing had happened to Mashuilwas. He had also been killed by his brothers and had been driven from his land. However, the Hittite king had given him refuge. Wijngaards also noted that the Amorite king Bentesina had rebelled against the Hittite king Muwatalli. The Hittite king "killed" Bentesina by leading him away into captivity. Then Muwatalli's brother Hattusil III restored Bentesina to the throne. In a letter to Hattusil III, Bentesina thanked him for raising him to life and restoring him to the throne. Wijngaards noted a number of other examples as well where "dying" and "living" referred to both reigning on the throne and keeping a proper vassal relationship with the sovereign.<sup>28</sup>

Moses used "live" and "die" in a treaty sense in Deuteronomy. In Deuteronomy 30:6-9, Moses promised that Yahweh would circumcise their hearts to "love" the Lord with all of their hearts so that they might "live." In Deuteronomy 30:19-20, Yahweh declared that He had set before Israel "life" and "death." God called Israel to choose "life" by "loving" the Lord and by obeying His commandments. In Deuteronomy 33:6, Moses recorded Reuben's blessing. In this verse, Moses blessed the tribe of Reuben by saying simply, "May Reuben live and not die." Moses was not contemplating the extinction of the tribe of Reuben.

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James Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents*, 5 vols. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1962 reprint), II:317; III:54.

<sup>26</sup> Frank H. Seilhamer, "The Role of Covenant in the Mission and Message of Amos." 435-51 in Howard N. Bream, et al, eds., *Old Testament Studies in Honor of Jacob M. Myers*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1974), 441.

<sup>27</sup> James K. Hoffmeier, "The Wives' Tales of Genesis 12, 20 & 26 and the Covenants at Beer-Sheba," *Tyndale Bulletin* 43 (1992): 92-3, 99.

<sup>28</sup> J. Wijngaards, "Death and Resurrection in Covenantal Context (Hos. VI 2)," *Vetus Testamentum* 17 (1967): 226-39.

He was praying that the Reubenites remain within the bounds of God's covenant, and not fall away from it.<sup>29</sup>

An important element of the treaty pattern was the idea of a covenant lawsuit. In the ancient Near Eastern treaties the gods prosecuted and judged treaty violators. The gods who had been called as witnesses to the treaties were also responsible to prosecute vassals who violated the terms of the treaty. Malamat described an example of such a divine judgment from a Hittite text. A plague had broken out in Anatolia during the reign of the Hittite king Shuppiluliuma. Twenty years later, the plague was still raging during the reign of Murshili who ruled from 1340 BC to 1310 BC. When Murshili sought the reason for the plague, he was shown an ancient tablet that recorded an earlier treaty with the Egyptians. The treaty was written in the middle of the 15th century BC, which would be very near the time of Israel's exodus from Egypt. The Hittite king Murshili was told that the Hattian storm god had served as witness and guarantee of that early treaty. When the Hittites violated the treaty with Egypt, the storm god brought the plague to punish them. Malamat notes that the Hittites had attacked Amqa, which was Egyptian territory. This led to a war with the Egyptians. Many prisoners were taken. When the Hittite prisoners returned to Anatolia, they brought the plague back with them from Egypt. Murshili then humbled himself before the storm god, offered sacrifices, and prayed that his father's sins be forgiven. The treaty tablet in this account was later used to establish a history of Egypt's relationship with the Hittites.<sup>30</sup>

As will be discussed later, the covenant lawsuit pattern was either mentioned or clearly expressed quite a few times in the Old Testament. In the covenant lawsuit, God brought His people into court for violating their covenant with Him. In this legal proceeding, God decreed that the curses of the covenant would fall on them because they had violated the terms of the treaty.

#### 4) JOSHUA AND THE TREATY PATTERN

Joshua tried many ways to remind Israel of their covenant responsibilities to Yahweh. In Joshua 8:30-35, Joshua called all Israel to Ebal and Gerizim. Joshua read the blessings and curses of Moses' law to the Israelites and the gentiles in the community. Joshua 8:35 stressed that Joshua read to them every word that Moses had commanded. Yet Joshua could not solve the basic problem of sin in the community. Already at the conquest, Israel was beginning to fail to meet their covenant responsibilities. Joshua 7:1 noted that Achan had stolen from Jericho gold and silver that was dedicated to Yahweh. His sin brought suffering to the nation. In Joshua 9:16, Israel had made a covenant with the Gibeonites without realizing that they lived in the land. This covenant had been formed without prayer. It guaranteed that the Gibeonites could not be driven from the land as Yahweh had decreed. Joshua 13-17 recorded that Joshua assigned territories to each of the tribes. Yet these chapters also noted that many gentiles remained in the land. Joshua 13:1-6 noted that much of the land remained to be possessed, including the land of the Philistines, Geshurites, Canaanites, Sidonians, Gebalites, and others. Joshua 13:13 noted that they did not dispossess the Geshurites or Maacathites. Joshua 15:63 noted that the sons of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem. Joshua 16:10 noted that the tribe of Ephraim did not drive out the inhabitants of Gezer although the Israelites did make them forced laborers. The book of Joshua recorded both God's faithfulness and the failures of His people.

Joshua knew from long and hard experience that Israel was unlikely to remain faithful to God. From the day that they had left Egypt, they had vacillated between obedience and idolatry. At the end of his life, Joshua called on Israel to remain faithful to God. In Joshua 23, Joshua had a reaffirmation of the covenant. Karl Baltzer argued that Joshua 23 resembled the treaty pattern. Baltzer noted that Joshua 23:3-4 traced Israel's earlier history as a history of God's saving acts. Baltzer noted that the substance of the covenant was given in Joshua 23:6-8, and the blessings and curses in 23:9-11.<sup>31</sup>

Then in Joshua 24, Joshua called God's people to make up their minds and choose who they would serve. If they would not serve Yahweh, Joshua told them to choose who they would serve. Then Joshua gave his farewell address to the nation. In his final message to Israel, Joshua once more echoed

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Other Mosaic references to the technical use of this word can be found in Lev. 18:5, Deut. 8:1-3, and 16:20-2. This motif can also be seen later in passages like Hos. 8:1; 2:3; 9:15 and 13:14.

<sup>30</sup> Abraham Malamat, "Doctrines of Causality in Hittite and Biblical Historiography: A Parallel," *Vetus Testamentum* 5 (1955): 1-12.

<sup>31</sup> Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary*, 63-5

the formal treaty pattern. Joshua 24:1 resembled a treaty prologue. It describes when and where the treaty reaffirmation was made. Joshua 24:2-13 resembled a treaty historical prologue. In this section, Joshua listed how God had been faithful to the Patriarchs and to the wilderness generation. Israel was called on to obey Yahweh's covenant because of all the mercy that God had shown them in the past. Joshua 24:14-18 resembled the stipulations of the covenant. This is the heart of the treaty. The basic stipulation of Joshua's covenant reaffirmation was that the Israelites should serve God alone. Joshua 24:19-20 resembled a treaty blessings and curses. These verses warned Israel that God would consume them if they rebelled against Him. Joshua 24:22 and 24:26-27 resembled the witnesses to a treaty. In verse 22, the Israelites noted that they were themselves witnesses that they chose to serve God. Verses 26-27 noted that a large monument of stone would also be a witness to the covenant. Joshua 24:26 resembled the provisions established to preserve the record of a treaty. The words of the covenant were written in the book of the Law of the Lord. Joshua 24 was a description of a historical event. It was not a treaty document as such. Yet in constructing his farewell speech and covenant reaffirmation, Joshua used all of the standard parts of an international treaty. It is not surprising that Joshua should use the treaty form in his farewell address. He had put the book of Deuteronomy into its final form. Then in Joshua 8:34-35, Joshua had read the blessings and curses of the covenant to all Israel. In Joshua 23:11, Joshua warned Israel to take care to "love" Yahweh their God.<sup>32</sup> Then in Joshua 23:14-16, Joshua warned them:

And behold, I am going today on the way of all the earth and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word from all the good words which Yahweh your God spoke about you has failed; all has come to you. (Even) one word has not failed from it. And it will be that (just as) the good things that Yahweh your God has said to you have come to you, so (also) Yahweh will bring on you every bad thing until he destroys you from this good land which Yahweh your God has given to you. When you go beyond the covenant of Yahweh your God which He commanded you, and (when) you go and serve other gods, and (when) you have bowed down to them, Yahweh's anger will burn against you, and you will perish quickly from the good land which He gave you.

Joshua warned that the covenant curses of Israel's treaty were as certain to follow as the promises which God had already kept for them. The future would bring great sorrow because of their revolt. Joshua 24:29 noted that Joshua died at the age of 110 which would have been around 1375 BC.

## **B) MOSES, JOSHUA AND ISRAEL'S EARLIEST ESCHATOLOGY**

### **1) PATRIARCHAL AGE ESCHATOLOGY**

Throughout the Pentateuch, Moses stressed that prophecy had always been an important part of God's relationship with His people. Moses claimed that prophecy is as old as the human race itself. Moses depicted Adam and Eve as walking and talking with God in the Garden of Eden both before and after the fall.<sup>33</sup> One of the first prophecies recorded in the Old Testament was added by Moses in Genesis 3:14-16. In this passage, God decreed the basic conflict that would dominate all of human history. There would be on going enmity between the offspring of Satan and the offspring of the promise. One day a promised child would be born who would crush the serpent's head by driving the serpent's poisoned fangs into His own heel. This verse is called the "Protoevangelium." It is the first statement of the gospel in the Bible. It is a clear promise pointing forward to Christ's victorious and voluntary death for His people. Genesis 3:16 decreed the family and social structure that would eventually give rise to the promised Son. Genesis 3:17-19 and 4:12 decreed that the earth would be cursed. This curse was fulfilled initially as the Younger Dryas destroyed the ancient Near Eastern ecosystem. When driven away from the tree of life, Adam and his descendants continued to meet God. Cain and Able presented their sacrifices to Yahweh, but only Able's

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The presence of treaty vocabulary in the Fertile Crescent during Joshua's life can be documented from Amarna Letter 17. This letter was written by a king of Mittani named Tushratta. He ruled roughly from 1390 BC to 1370 BC. He wrote to Amenhotep III, claiming, "My father loved thee, and thou didst love my father still more. And my father, because of his love, has given my sister to thee." Samuel A. B. Mercer, *The Tell El-Amarna Tablets*, 2 vols. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1939), I:63.

<sup>33</sup>  
Gen. 3:8.

sacrifice was based on faith and obedience.<sup>34</sup> In Genesis 4:1-8 and God warned Cain about the danger behind his attitude. When Cain's rage was poured out against his brother, Yahweh appeared to Cain in a covenant lawsuit hearing, and God pronounced judgment on him. Cain's greatest grief from Yahweh's judgment was that he would be hidden from God's face.<sup>35</sup>

While Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, Adam's son Seth began the tradition of calling on God's name. This tradition produced men of great faith like Enoch. Genesis 5:24 recorded that Enoch walked so closely with God that God took him directly to heaven without seeing death.<sup>36</sup> Jude 14-15 described Enoch in these words,

And also to these (the) 7<sup>th</sup> (generation) from Adam, Enoch, saying, "Behold the Lord came with myriads of His saints to do judgment against all, and to rebuke all their ungodly about all of their ungodly words which they did, and about all the hard things that the ungodly sinners spoke against Him<sup>37</sup>

According to Jude, Enoch was a prophet.

Genesis 7:1 recorded that God appeared to Noah and warned him of the coming judgment. Noah then warned his generation that they needed to repent. II Peter 2:5 called Noah a preacher of righteousness. Noah was a prophet who called his generation to repentance.<sup>38</sup> After the flood, Genesis 8:20-23 recorded God's promise that He would never again curse the ground on account of man. Seed time and harvest, summer and winter, would never cease. This promise assumed that summer and winter had stopped during the Younger Dryas and that such a period would never return before the eschaton.<sup>39</sup> The flood account concluded in Genesis 9:25-27 with a prophecy that would shape human history down to the eschaton. Noah cursed Canaan and declared that his descendants would become servants of servants. Then Noah decreed that the Lord would be the God of Shem's descendants and the descendants of Canaan must serve them.

In Genesis 20:7, Yahweh warned Abimelech that Abraham was a prophet. Throughout his life, Abraham demonstrated that he was a prophet. God appeared to Abraham when he was still in Ur, and again when he lived in Haran.<sup>40</sup> God appeared to Abraham frequently and told him many things. In Genesis 15:13-14, God told Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a foreign land and would be oppressed for 400 years. Then God would judge that nation, and Israel would come out of it with great possessions. In Genesis 18:18, Abraham was promised that his descendants would become a great nation, and in him all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Jacob inherited Abraham's role as a prophet. God appeared to Jacob on several occasions as well. In Genesis 35:10-12, God said to Jacob, "be fruitful and multiply, both a nation and a company of nations will come from you, and kings will come from you." In Genesis 48:19, Ephraim was promised that he would become a multitude of nations. These were more than just promises of blessing to Israel's Patriarchs. They were prophecies that pointed down the halls of history.

Faith in God was not limited to Israel. It was found more widely among a remnant within the West Semitic world. This remnant included the descendants of the Patriarchs who often lived east of the Jordan River.<sup>41</sup> Patriarchal Age West Semitic believers included Melchizedek and perhaps Abimelech.<sup>42</sup> West

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<sup>35</sup> Heb. 11:4.

<sup>36</sup> Gen. 4:14.

<sup>37</sup> Heb. 11:5.

<sup>38</sup> The relationship between Jude's quotation from Enoch and the late books of Enoch has been an ongoing problem.

<sup>39</sup> Heb. 11:7.

<sup>40</sup> Gen. 9:9-12 echoed that a great flood would never again destroy the earth.

<sup>41</sup> Gen. 12:1-3; Acts 7:2

<sup>42</sup> Gen. 25:1-20; 36:1-19.

In Gen. 20:3, God appeared to Abimelech in a dream. It was not impossible for God to appear to unbelievers. The Angel of the Lord even appeared to Balaam's donkey in Num. 22:25. Yet such an appearance to an unbeliever would have been at least very unusual in the Old Testament. The closest later parallel in the Old Testament may be the hand writing on

Semitic believers during Israel's Egyptian sojourn included Eliphaz the Temanite who may have been a descendant of Esau.<sup>43</sup> Other West Semitic believers at this time included Job and Job's friends Bildad the Shuhite, Zophar the Naamathite, and Elihu the Buzite. West Semitic gentile believers from the Mosaic Age included Jethro and perhaps Balaam.

While Israel sojourned in Egypt, Job lived in the land of Uz east of the Jordan River. Job was a righteous man who eventually received a vision of God. Job was then also a prophet, and his words reveal much about pre-Israelite West Semitic faith.<sup>44</sup> Job and his friends frequently commented about the nature of the afterlife. They even recognized the reality of eternal punishment.<sup>45</sup> They discussed events in heaven and the nature of true righteousness.<sup>46</sup> Job knew that God revealed mysteries and brought deep darkness to light.<sup>47</sup> Two of the most striking prophecies in the book of Job were found in Job 19:23-29 and 33:23-28. These verses read:

Oh that now my words were written. Oh that they were engraved in a book, that with an iron stylus<sup>48</sup> and lead, forever in a rock they were cut. I know my Redeemer lives, and at the last on the dust (of the earth), He will stand. After my skin they strike off, yet from my flesh, I will see God, who I will see for myself, and my eyes will see and no other.

If there is for him an angel, a mediator, one out of a thousand, to declare to a man what (would be) his right, then let him (the mediator) be gracious to him, and say, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom. Let his flesh be fresher than a youth, let return the days of his youth; he will supplicate God, and He will accept him, and he will see His face with joy, and He may return to a man his righteousness. He will sing to men and say, I sinned and righteousness I perverted, and it was not requited to me (as I deserved). He has redeemed my soul from going down to the (dark) pit, and my life shall see in the light.

These verses were pre-Mosaic West Semitic prophecies of Christ's redemptive work.

## 2) WILDERNESS AGE ESCHATOLOGY

During the Mosaic Age, one of the greatest prophets was Balaam. He was a man with great spiritual weaknesses and these weaknesses would eventually lead to great sin and bring about his death.<sup>49</sup> Yet he was also a true prophet of God. Numbers 23:7 noted that Balaam had come from the

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the wall in Dan. 5:5. It would seem more likely that Abimelech was a West Semitic believer ruling over a city that contained a strong Philistine population. In Job 13:15-6, Job declared that a godless man could not come before God's presence.

Esau's firstborn son was Eliphaz, and his son was chief Teman in Gen. 36:15. Since family names were often handed down among the royalty, a later ruler named Eliphaz the Temanite may very well have been a descendant of Esau.

There are several mysteries involved in the book of Job. One mystery is the date and authorship of the book. The story occurred while Israel sojourned in Egypt, but there has been endless debate about when the book itself was written. Another mystery in the book is the identity of the person who received a prophetic revelation about the contest between Satan and El Shaddai. Who learned about the events in passages like Job 1:6-12? It may be that God revealed these things to Job after the close of the book.

<sup>46</sup> Job 10:20-22; 18:1-21; 20:26-29; 26:5-11; 30:23.

<sup>47</sup> Job 1:6-11; 31:9-15.

<sup>48</sup> Job 12:22-25.

A reference to an iron stylus during the Bronze Age could argue for a late date for the book of Job. However, limited amounts of iron were used surprisingly early in human history. This iron was often obtained from meteors instead of iron ore. So small items like writing implements could have been made from iron.

Balaam's reputation did not fare well because of his sins. In 700 BC, Balaam's memory was being used in syncretistic forms of worship in the Levant. A Dutch excavation of Deir 'Alla in Jordan in 1967 found an inscription that mentioned Balaam. The inscription had originally been painted on a wall. The wall had been knocked down in an earthquake that had struck the Levant around 760 BC. This earthquake occurred during Uzziah's reign. The Balaam text claimed to record a vision of the gods. It recorded a terrible destruction that the gods would bring on the land. Meindert Dijkstra, "Is Balaam also among the Prophets?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114 (1995): 43-64. In the New Testament age, the Jewish

eastern mountains in Aram near the Euphrates River.<sup>50</sup> This region was not far from Haran and from the descendants of Abraham and his relatives.<sup>51</sup> Balak explained why he had summoned Balaam to Moab. Balak declared in Numbers 22:6, "For I know that whom you bless is being blessed, and whom you curse is cursed." The ability to bless and curse in the Old Testament was not a form of magic. It was based on recognition of God's judgment and God's actions. The prophets could only bless and curse when they saw God blessing and cursing.<sup>52</sup> Balaam explained this to Balak in Numbers 23:20. Balaam said, "Behold, I have received (a command) to bless. He has blessed and I cannot change it." Balaam knew Yahweh and saw God several times. His prophecies looked far into Israel's future. Balaam's relationship to the West Semitic believing tradition can be seen in Numbers 23:1 and 23:29. Balaam repeatedly offered seven bulls and seven rams as a sin offering for Balak. This was the same sin offering that God commanded Job to offer for his three friends in Job 42:8. This suggested that Balaam shared the same tradition of faith as Job.

Moses recorded Balaam's prophecies in Numbers 22-25. This was a surprisingly large amount of material, and it reflected the importance that Moses placed on Balaam's words. Moses recorded a series of prophecies by Balaam that looked far beyond the wilderness community. This was surprising because Balaam opposed Israel and his advice to Balak led to the death of a great many Israelites in God's judgment. Yet Moses chose to record at length the prophecies that Yahweh had made through him. Moses recognized the truth and importance of his visions despite the prophet's own sin and rebellion.

In Numbers 24:14-18, Balaam pointed forward to the "days to come." Balaam began his vision with the words,

And now, behold, I got go my people. I will advise you (about) what this people will do to your people in the latter days. And he took up his *mashal*<sup>53</sup> and said, "Balaam, the son of Beor, the statement of the man with his eyes open, the statement of one who hears God's words and who knows the knowledge of Elyon, the one who sees the vision of Shaddai, falling down with his eyes uncovered. I see Him, but not now. I behold Him, but not near. A star comes from Jacob and a scepter from Israel. He will dash the sides of Moab, and scoop out all the sons of Seth. Edom shall be a possession, and Seir, its enemies, will be a possession, but Israel will act mightily. He from Jacob will rule, and He will destroy those who escape from the city.

Then in Numbers 24:20-25, Balaam looked far in the future. He prophesied,

He saw Amalek and took up his *mashal*, and he said, Amalek was the first of the nations, but his end shall be destruction. And he saw the Kenite, and took up his *mashal* and said, Your dwelling is enduring, and your nest is set in the cleft, but the Kenite will shall be consumed until Assyria take it captive. And he took up his *mashal*, and he said, Alas, who will live when God does this? And ships (will come) from the coast of Chittim (or Greece). They will afflict Assyria and they will afflict Eber (or the Hebrews), but they will come to destruction.

This promise might point to the Sea People invasion of 1200 BC, or it might point all the way forward to the Greek invasion a thousand years later. In favor of the Greek interpretation is that fact that the ships from Kittim afflicted Asshur. The sea people destroyed Asia Minor and the cultures of the Levant. Yet they did not threaten Assyria. Alexander the Great conquered Mesopotamia as a whole.

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community branded Balaam as the most wicked man in history. This evaluation grew partly from Balaam's sin and partly from a Jewish response to Christian polemical use of Balaam's prophecy.

<sup>50</sup>Num. 22:5; 23:7.

<sup>51</sup>Gen. 25:1-5 noted that Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac beyond the gifts that he gave to the children of Keturah and his concubines. These were sent from Palestine to the east. Their descendants may have included Job, his friends, and Balaam. O'Callaghan noted that Haran was also called Padan-Aram which meant "the road to Aram." Roger T. O'Callaghan, *Aram Naharaim*, (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1948).

<sup>52</sup>This blessing and cursing ability reflected God's covenant promise to His servants. Yahweh had promised Abraham in Gen. 12:3, "I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse." God's blessing and cursing can be seen in passages like Ps. 37:22.

<sup>53</sup>A *mashal* is a proverb, a saying, or a prophecy.

Unfortunately for Balaam, he did not return to Aram. He remained and advised Balak to tempt Israel into sin so that God might turn against them. Joshua 13:22 noted that Balaam was killed in an Israelite attack. Beyond that, Moses commanded in Deuteronomy 23:3-6 that no Moabite or Ammonite could ever enter the congregation of Israel even to the tenth generation, and Israel was never to seek the peace and prosperity of those nations.

These West Semitic roots flowed into Moses' own eschatological perspective. Moses was a great prophet in his own right. His prophecies ranged from the immediate future to the end of history. His prophetic perspective can be seen in Exodus 15:13. In this verse, Israel had passed through the *yam sūph*, and God had promised to lead Israel to His holy dwelling place. Both this verse and its parallel in Exodus 15:17 have generated substantial academic discussion because they are among the earliest Scriptural examples of the holy mountain motif.<sup>54</sup> When Israel arrived at the far shore, the Song of Moses promised that Yahweh would plant them in the mountain of His inheritance. This mountain would be the place which He had chosen for His dwelling place, and the sanctuary which His hands had established.<sup>55</sup> These words were not a later addition to the text. David Noel Freedman argued that this passage breathed the air of the desert.<sup>56</sup> Moses' claims in the Song of Moses seem at first rather surprising. Moses claimed that the inhabitants of Philistia, Canaan, Edom and Moab were dismayed when they heard about Israel's exodus from Egypt and they melted away before Israel.<sup>57</sup> Moses claimed that these nations were terrified and remained motionless as stone as Israel passed over them and as Yahweh brought Israel to His holy mountain. Then Yahweh planted Israel in the mountain of His inheritance, the place that He chose for His dwelling place, and the sanctuary which His hands had established. Moses promised that Yahweh would reign forever. All of these things were still far in the future when Moses stood with Israel on the far bank of the *yam sūph*. Moses' song was fulfilled only in a provisional way when Yahweh led Israel to Sinai. The bulk of Moses' words pointed far beyond Sinai to Palestine, Mount Zion, and finally the New Jerusalem in the eschaton.

Moses made a number of other prophecies about Israel's future. In Deuteronomy 17:14-20, Moses pointed Israel forward to the years after they entered the Promised Land. Moses said that in the future they would decide to set a king over themselves. Moses decreed that the king they chose was to have a special character. He was forbidden to multiply wives, money, or military power. Instead, he was to write a

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See for example, James Muilenburg, "A Liturgy of the Triumphs of Yahweh," in *Studia Biblica et Semitica*, (Wageningen: H. Beenman & Zonen, 1966), 244. Marc Rozelaar, "The Song of the Sea," *Vetus Testamentum* 2 (1952): 225. John D. Watts, "The Song of the Sea," *Vetus Testamentum* 7 (1957), 375.

<sup>55</sup> The promise of a holy mountain may also stand behind Deut. 33:13-17. In this passage, Moses blessed the tribes Ephraim and Manasseh that were descended from Joseph. Moses promised that they would be blessed with the choice things of the ancient mountains and the everlasting hills. This promise pointed backward to the ancient holy mountain tradition represented in Patriarchal worship, and perhaps even to Eden before it. This promise was fulfilled when Ephraim and Manasseh were given their inheritance within the highlands of Palestine.

<sup>56</sup> Freedman noted that this passage must refer to a true temple that was not made with human hands. Freedman suggested that this temple must be located on top of the mountain that was sacred to the god worshiped in the temple. Freedman argued that this could only refer to Sinai or Zion. Freedman claimed that the Song of the Sea breathed the air of the desert. He claimed that the poem's intellectual horizon did not extend beyond the Sinai desert. He suggested that the poem contained no reference to the conquest or the land of Palestine. He argued that the poem only described four nations that were Israel's neighbors in the desert. These four nations were depicted as being only spectators of what God had done through Israel. Freedman concluded from this that the Song of the Sea found its original setting in the wilderness before the conquest. Richard Clifford suggested that this verse depicted the whole land of Palestine as God's holy mountain. David N. Freedman, "Temple Without Hands," 21-30 in *Temples and High Placed in Biblical Times*, (Jerusalem: Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, 1981), 23. See also the discussion in Richard J. Clifford, "In Zion and David a New Beginning: An Interpretation of Psalm 78," 121-41 in Baruch Halpern and Jon D. Levenson, eds. *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith*, (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1981), 134-35.

<sup>57</sup> In Josh. 2:8-11, Rahab almost seemed to be quoting from these words. Rahab claimed that the terror of Israel had fallen on all the inhabitants of Palestine, and the inhabitants of the land had melted away before them. Rahab said that she knew that Yahweh had given them the land. Rahab said that they knew how Yahweh had dried the Red Sea before them, and how they had defeated Sihon and Og. Rahab said that they had melted away before Israel because Yahweh was God in heaven above and on earth beneath. Moses' claim that Edom and Moab were motionless as stone does seem rather odd.

copy of God's law for himself and read it every day of his life. Israel would not appoint a king over the nation for 400 years after Moses' time, and few of Israel's kings would ever keep these rules.

In Deuteronomy 18:14-22, Moses promised that Yahweh would raise up a prophet from among the Israelites who would speak Yahweh's Word as Yahweh commanded. Moses warned that the Israelites must obey their future prophets and would be judged by God for not doing so. Moses also warned that false prophets would be judged by God and should not be obeyed. Moses' words pointed forward to a long tradition of prophets who would call God's people to revival and kingdom loyalty.

Many of Moses' prophecies about Israel's future were found in his account of Jacob's blessings in Genesis 49 and the record of his own blessings in Deuteronomy 33. When Jacob blessed his sons at the end of his life, Jacob made prophecies about the distant future of their descendants. In Genesis 49:1, Jacob promised to tell his sons what would happen to their descendants in the "days to come." Since Moses wrote both accounts, it is striking that the blessings in Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33 resembled each other in several ways.<sup>58</sup> It would seem possible that Moses structured his own blessing in the light of Jacob's blessing. He may have recorded Jacob's blessings in Genesis partly because parts of Jacob's blessings echoed Moses' own expectations for the future of the tribes. Other parts of it differed from Moses' expectations for Israel, and the differences may be important. In Genesis 49:3-4, Jacob simply removed Reuben's leadership of the family despite the fact that he was the firstborn. Jacob gave Reuben no blessing at all. The disinheritance of a first born son was seen as being a very serious event in the ancient Near East.<sup>59</sup> Van Der Merwe suggested that Reuben had earned this disinheritance by attempting to replace Jacob in the Patriarchal household. He had tried to do so by taking over his father's concubines which in that culture signaled a replacement of leadership.<sup>60</sup> Moses recognized the validity of Jacob's judgment. In Deuteronomy 33:6, Moses simply expressed his hope that Reuben should "live" and not "die." Moses was using treaty terminology to indicate that the tribe of Reuben should remain within its covenant relationship with God. Moses had nothing to say about the tribe's future beyond this.

In Genesis 49:5-7 Jacob declared that Levi and Simeon should be scattered among Israel because of their violence at Shechem. In Deuteronomy 33:8-11, Moses indicated how this would be fulfilled for the tribe of Levi in the future. The Levites would become priests and would live scattered through the nation. Moses declared that their ministry would be blessed by God even though they would receive no land inheritance. Moses did not even mention Simeon in his blessings. After the conquest, the tribe of Simeon would be scattered through Judah. This would also a blessing of sorts because Judah would remain more faithful than the northern tribes in future years.

In Genesis 49:8-12, Jacob decreed that Judah should have the position of leadership in the family. Jacob's words were a messianic prophecy that pointed to Christ's rule as Judah's great descendant. Jacob promised that Judah would hold the ruler's staff until He came to whom it belonged.<sup>61</sup> Then He would have the obedience of the peoples. He would tie His donkey's colt to a vine and wash His garments in red wine. These words certainly seem to point forward to Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and to

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Joel Heck traced the rise of the critical interpretation of both Gen. 49 and Deut. 33. Heck noted that today many critical scholars hold both chapters to be very late material added after the exile. Joel D. Heck, "A History of Interpretation of Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 147 (1990): 16-31.

Selman noted that parents in the ancient Near East could not arbitrarily change the inheritance rights of their children. Such disinheritance could only occur as a result of a very serious attack on the family by the son. Selman noted as an example of this the law code of Hammurabi. This law code required that a disinheritance be approved by the court. It could only occur if a son took legal action against his parents, or usurped a father's authority, or despised his parents. Selman suggested that Reuben's sin against Jacob in Gen. 35:22 was such an offense. M. J. Selman, "Comparative Customs and the Patriarchal Age," 91-139 in A. R. Millard & D. J. Wiseman, eds. *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives*, (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983).

B. J. Van Der Merwe, "Joseph as Successor of Jacob," 221-32 in *Studia Biblica et Semitica*, (Wageningen: H. Vecuman & Zonen, 1966).

The New Revised Standard Version translated the verse as "until tribute comes." Edwin Good noted that Judah's blessing has been the subject of much academic debate. Good suggested that the whole blessing was an ironic reference to Judah's earlier sins. Good suggested several ways that Shiloh has been understood, and interpreted the word as a reference to Judah's son Shelah in the light of textual variants. Edwin M. Good, "The 'Blessing' of Judah, Gen 49:8-12," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 82 (1963): 427-32. In contrast, Alan MacRae suggested that the name should be translated as "until He comes to whom it belongs," and have seen the verse as a messianic prophecy.

descriptions of Him in the book of Revelation. Moses' blessing on Judah in Deuteronomy 33:7 was much shorter. Moses simply prayed that the Lord would hear Judah's voice and would bring Judah to his people. Moses added that he contended for his people, and that God would help him against his adversaries. This seems a very odd blessing. How could Judah be brought to his people? The passage makes sense if it is understood as a messianic prophecy, just as Jacob's words in Genesis 49:8-12 had been a messianic prophecy.

In Genesis 49:13-15, Jacob promised that Zebulun would dwell at the seashore. He would be a haven for ships, and his flanks would be by the seashore. Jacob promised that Issachar would lie among the sheep folds. However, Jacob warned that Issachar would choose to dwell in a pleasant land, but would become forced labor because of that choice. Jacob's words were literally fulfilled. Some Israelites from Zebulun and Issachar inhabited highlands, and supported Deborah in her conflicts. Others from these tribes inhabited the coastal plains in northern Palestine.<sup>62</sup> The plains were dominated by the Canaanites, and Israelites on the plains became forced labor for the Canaanites. In Deuteronomy 33:18-19, Moses reflected the same ambiguity in Zebulun and Issachar's future. He noted that these tribes would offer righteous sacrifices and call Israel to the mountains. Yet he also noted that these tribes would draw out the abundance of the seas and the hidden treasures of the sand. Jacob's blessing for Joseph in Genesis 49:22-26 was long and detailed. Moses' blessing on Joseph in Deuteronomy 33:13-17 was equally long and detailed. While far from identical, there were striking similarities between the blessings of Jacob and Moses. Both declared that Joseph would receive the blessing of heaven above and of the great deep beneath. Both promised that Joseph would be distinguished among his brothers, and both associated this blessing with the crown of Joseph's head. Both associated Joseph's blessing with the everlasting hills. Jacob promised that Joseph would be blessed by his father's God who had helped him. Moses promised that Joseph would receive the favor of Him who had dwelt in the burning bush.<sup>63</sup>

Another strong eschatological element of Moses' teaching can be found in the blessings and curses that he recorded as a part of God's covenant. These blessings and curses were written in a number of passages in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. In these passages, Moses warned Israel about the cost of rebellion. This was a consistent theme for Moses because he realized that Israel would earn God's judgment in the future just as they had done throughout the wilderness journey. In Deuteronomy 31:29, Moses warned that he knew Israel would bring God's judgment on themselves in "the latter days," or the "last days." Moses taught Israel the consequences of disobedience in Leviticus 26. Moses warned in Leviticus 26:1-22 that disobedience would result in terror, disease, military defeat, and poverty. If these things did not drive Israel back to God, Leviticus 26:30-39 warned that the Israelites would be driven from Yahweh's land. They would be scattered among the nations as their land was made desolate. They would flee and would perish among the nations.

In Deuteronomy 4:25-31, Moses also wrote about Israel's distant future. Moses warned that Israel would reject Yahweh after they had lived for a long time in the Promised Land. When that happened, Moses warned that they would be scattered among the nations and would be left few in number. They would serve other gods in exile. Then they would seek Yahweh in their distress. Moses promised in Deuteronomy 4:30 that Israel would return from exile in the "latter days," or the "last days." Then Yahweh would restore them to the land because of His covenant with their fathers.

In Deuteronomy 27-29, Moses recorded the formal covenant blessings and curses of Israel's treaty with Yahweh. In Deuteronomy 28:64-68, Moses warned that the Israelites would eventually be driven from the land for their rebellion against Yahweh. In exile, they would be scattered among the nations and would serve other gods. They would find no rest among those nations and would live in despair. They would offer themselves as slaves and would find no one even willing to buy them, and they

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The location of Zebulun's territory has been debated at length. At best Zebulun inherited only a small stretch of coastland around Nahalol. However, Jacob's promise might refer to the number of tribe members who became sailors instead of the amount of land bordering the sea.

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The relationship between the blessings of Jacob and Moses are more ambiguous when describing Dan, Gad, Naphtali, Benjamin, and Asher. Both Jacob and Moses did hint at the abundance which Asher would find living on the coastal plains among the Canaanites. There would seem to be a clear relationship of some kind between the blessings by Jacob and Moses, though the reason for that blessing can be debated. The blessings may be similar simply because the blessings were ultimately given by the same God. It is also possible that under the influence of the Holy Spirit, Moses intentionally reflected Jacob's words in his own blessing.

would live in dread. Deuteronomy 29:23-28 warned that when Yahweh drove Israel from the land, Palestine would become desolate like the region of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Deuteronomy 30:1-10 then looked even further into the future. In these verses, Moses looked forward to the eschaton. Moses promised that in the distant future both the blessings and curses of the covenant would have come on Israel and they would have been scattered among the nations. After suffering among the nations, Israel would return to the Lord with their whole heart and He would restore them to the land. Then Yahweh would gather them from the ends of the earth. Yahweh would circumcise their hearts to "love" Yahweh with all of their hearts. This promise of a circumcised heart would become extremely important among the eighth and seventh century BC prophets who associated this new heart with the New Kingdom. Moses spoke of the same time period in Numbers 14:19-25. In these verses Moses reminded Israel that he had prayed for them on Sinai after their sin with the golden calf. Moses reminded Israel that God had agreed to pardon their sin and not destroy the nation at Sinai although all the adults in the community would die in the wilderness because of their unbelief. Yahweh also warned that in the future, all the earth would be filled with the glory of the Lord. This pointed Israel forward to the time when all sin and revolt would be removed from the earth in God's judgment. Then in the eschaton, God's Spirit and God's glory would fill the whole earth.

### 3) JOSHUA'S CONQUEST ESCHATOLOGY

The Spirit of prophecy was passed from Moses to Joshua who was an enormously important figure in the wilderness tradition. Steven noted in Acts 7:25 that Moses had believed that he was Israel's promised deliverer before he murdered an Egyptian. Moses failed as Israel's deliverer because of his sin. So God produced another deliverer. Joshua the son of Nun was born in the tribe of Ephraim. The name Joshua was given to him by Moses. The name meant "Yahweh saved," and the later Greek spelling of his name would be "Jesus." It is striking that Joshua was depicted in the Old Testament as a perfect man. While even Moses was judged for his sin, Joshua never broke faith with God. So in a typological and prophetic sense, Moses was replaced by Jesus, the child of the promise, because Moses' own sin had prevented him from bringing deliverance to the nation.

Joshua was a literate man, and the book of Joshua was permeated with references to literacy.<sup>64</sup> Joshua first appeared in the Biblical text in Exodus 17:8-16.<sup>65</sup> Joshua was not a lad at this time, although Exodus 33:11 described him as a young man.<sup>66</sup> Joshua was a warrior. Moses asked Joshua to choose men in Israel who could fight against an Amalekite attack. Joshua led the fight against Amalek himself and he won the victory with divine assistance mediated through Moses and Aaron. Yahweh told Moses to write in a book as a memorial that Yahweh would wage war against Amalek from generation to generation until the Amalekites were destroyed. Then Moses was commanded to read what he had written to Joshua. It may have been at this time that Moses changed his name from Hoshea to Joshua.<sup>67</sup> From that point forward, Moses and Joshua formed a strong team.

Joshua soon joined the ranks of the messengers who stood in Yahweh's presence and heard His Word. In Exodus 24:13, Joshua accompanied Moses as he climbed Mount Sinai. In Exodus 32:17, Moses and Joshua returned from Mount Sinai to deal with the golden calf apostasy. Numbers 13-14 depicted Joshua as one of the tribal leaders who spied out the land. Numbers 14:6-10 recorded that Joshua and Caleb alone urged the Israelites to keep faith in Yahweh and follow Him into the Promised Land. Only the appearance of God's glory in the tent of meeting prevented the Israelites from stoning Joshua for his

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Ex. 17:14; Josh. 1:7-8; 8:32-35; 10:13; 18:4-9; 23:6; 24:26. Josh. 24:26 noted that Joshua had made a covenant with Israel and had written it in the book of the law of God. This has usually been taken to be an indication that Joshua added to the history that Moses began. Joshua's addition became the book of Joshua. Hess argued for broad literacy in Israel during the Iron I and Iron II periods. Richard S. Hess, "Writing about Writing: Abecedaries and Evidence for Literacy in Ancient Israel," *Vetus Testamentum* 56 (2006): 342-46. The Iron I began two centuries after Joshua's time by an 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty exodus model.

<sup>65</sup> Num. 11:28 claimed that Joshua was Moses' attendant from his youth.

<sup>66</sup> The West Semitic world valued age far more than the modern world. A young man did not gain full adult rights until he was 30 years old. Moses was 80 years old at the exodus and he lived to be 120. Joshua lived to be 110.

<sup>67</sup> Num. 13:16.

witness to God's power. Numbers 26:65 noted that only Joshua and Caleb survived the wilderness journey of all the adult men who had left Egypt. Numbers 32:12 noted that these two had followed Yahweh fully. Numbers 27:18-23 noted that Moses placed his hands on Joshua and commissioned him to lead the nation after Moses died. These verses described Joshua as a man in whom was God's Spirit.<sup>68</sup> Moses visibly placed some of his own authority on Joshua in the eyes of the nation. In Deuteronomy 1:38, Moses told Israel that Joshua would lead them into the Promised Land and would cause them to inherit it.<sup>69</sup> Deuteronomy 31:14-15 noted that Yahweh appeared in the tabernacle consecrating Joshua's leadership.

Deuteronomy 34:1-8 recorded Moses' death. These words may have been written by Joshua near the end of his own life. The relatively late date for this passage can be seen in the first verse. Joshua noted in Deuteronomy 34:1 that Moses saw the land from the top of Mount Pisgah. There Moses saw the land from Gilead to Dan. This claim would only have been possible after the tribes had received their inheritance.<sup>70</sup> It probably would have to have been made after the tribe of Dan left its original inheritance and seized Laish on Israel's northern border. This immigration north was recorded both in Joshua 19:47-49 and Judges 18.

Joshua may not only have put the Pentateuch into its final form, he may also have written the book of Joshua. The theological significance of this book has often been overlooked in the ongoing debate over the date of the sea crossing. The heart of Joshua's message was that God had indeed kept His promises to Israel, so the Israelites were urged to keep Yahweh's commands. The central claim of the book can be seen in Joshua 21:44-45. These verses read,

And Yahweh gave them rest around them according to all that He swore to their fathers, and not a man stood before them from all of their enemies. Yahweh gave all their enemies into their hand. Not a word failed from every good word that Yahweh spoke to the house of Israel. They all came to pass.

Much of Joshua's message was a drawn out "now and not yet" prophecy of the eschaton. God's promises had been kept. God had fulfilled His promises. He had given them the land, and had promised to drive out the inhabitants before Israel in a gradual way. The theme of Joshua was one of victory. This contrasted strongly with the book of Judges which was written 400 years later. Judges was written in David's time to justify David's kingdom.<sup>71</sup> The theme of Judges was that the nation has progressively become farther from God in cycles of rebellion and judgment. Each man had done what was right in his own eyes instead of obeying God. So a righteous king was needed to bring the nation back to God

The central idea in the book of Joshua was that Yahweh, the divine warrior, was conquering His enemies and was giving His land to His people. This theme had been central to the Pentateuch. When

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<sup>69</sup> Deut. 34:9 claimed that Joshua was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him.

<sup>70</sup> See also Deut. 3:21; 3:28.

<sup>71</sup> Joshua's editing hand might also be seen in Gen. 14:14 where the name Dan was also used as a geographical term. The book of Joshua also contained a few passages that could possibly be interpreted as reflecting later editing of the text. Josh. 17:12-3 claimed that the Canaanites continued to live in Manasseh. When the Israelites became strong, the Canaanites were put to forced labor or tribute. Judges 1:35 made the same claim for Amorites living in Mount Heres. When the sons of Judah became strong, the Amorites became tribute or forced labor. Judges seemed to describe a give and take historical process. When they were strong, they dominated the Amorites. When they were weak, they could not do so. The same idea seemed to stand behind the reference in Josh. 17. Yet it is questionable whether this process could have occurred in the 25 or 30 years of Joshua's rule. Josh. 11:21 mentioned the hill country of Judah and the hill country of Israel. This seemed to suggest that the division between Judah and Israel had already occurred when this verse was written. Of course, Josh. 11:16 included the hill country of Israel among a number of other geographical regions in Palestine. This suggested that Josh. 11:21 may not really have distinguished between Judah and Israel.

While the Evangelical community commonly seeks the apostle Paul's purposes for writing his letters, conservative authors have been less comfortable seeking the purposes for which Old Testament books were written. This hesitancy to seek authorial intent in the Old Testament may partly be a reaction to the importance of authorial intent in the mainstream academic community. Soggin noted the importance of authorial intent for the Documentary Hypothesis. He noted that the J material is often seen as an attempt to legitimize David's kingdom since it was felt to be an alien form of government in Israel. The E material was then collected much later to oppose syncretism between the worship of Yahweh and Canaanite religion. J. Alberto Soggin, "The History of Ancient Israel: A Study in Some Questions of Method," *Eretz-Israel* 14 (1978): 49\*. The search for authorial (or editorial) intent also underlies the whole field of Redaction Criticism. Conservatives reject strongly both the Documentary Hypothesis and Redaction Criticism.

Yahweh encountered Moses in Exodus 3:4-8, Yahweh declared that He had come to deliver Israel from the Egyptians. In Exodus 4:23, Yahweh declared that He would kill Pharaoh's firstborn son unless he let Israel go free. In Exodus 14:14, Moses promised Israel on the Red Sea shore that God would fight for them while they kept silent. After Yahweh destroyed Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea, Moses declared in Exodus 15:3 that Yahweh was a warrior. In Deuteronomy 1:30, Moses reminded Israel of their earlier refusal to enter the land. Moses reminded them of his promise that God would fight on their behalf. In Deuteronomy 3:21-22, promised that Yahweh would fight for Israel as Joshua led them against the nations of Palestine. In Deuteronomy 20:1-4, Moses promised Israel that God would go with them and would fight their enemies. Joshua repeated this promise to Israel in Joshua 10:25. Joshua called Israel to be strong and courageous for God would give them victory over their enemies.

In Joshua 1:1-7, God appeared to Joshua after Moses had died. God repeated to Joshua His earlier promise to Moses. Yahweh promised that He would give Israel the land from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean Sea. Yahweh promised that no man would be able to stand before Joshua all the days of his life. Joshua 2:9-11 recorded Rahab's words that the fear of Israel and Israel's God was driving out the inhabitants of the land. Rahab said that the inhabitants of the land were melting away before Israel in terror. Jesus' appearance to Joshua was a "now and not yet" coming of the King to His kingdom.