

12.14 Coming to Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:1–25; Deuteronomy 4:9–12; 33:2, 3; Psalm 28:3–8; Hebrews 4:9–15; 12:18–29)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows.

[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools

- “Life of Moses” Series 2 Flash-a-Cards from A Beka Book and/or pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional needed materials.
- (optional) *Herein Is Love Commentary Series; Exodus, A Commentary for Children*, by Nancy Ganz, Shepherd Press, 2002.
- A ram’s horn, if available, or a trumpeter and his/her trumpet

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *covenant*: a binding agreement between two or more persons; God sometimes made unilateral (unconditional) covenants in which He promised certain things no matter what the other person did. Bilateral (conditional) covenants required responsibility of all the people involved.
- *consecrate*: to devote oneself to God

Scripture (NASB)

Exodus 19:1 In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. **2** When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain. **3** Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: **4** ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself. **5** Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; **6** and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”

7 So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him. **8** All the people answered together and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do!” And Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. **9** The LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I will come to you in a thick cloud, so that the people may hear when I speak with you and may also believe in you forever.” Then Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.

10 The LORD also said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments; **11** and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. **12** You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, ‘Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. **13** No hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through; whether beast or man, he shall not live.’ When the ram’s horn sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain.” **14** So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people, and they washed their garments. **15** He said to the people, “Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman.”

16 So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who *were* in the camp trembled. **17** And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.

18 Now Mount Sinai *was* all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. 19 When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. 20 The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. 21 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, “Go down, warn the people, so that they do not break through to the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish. 22 Also let the priests who come near to the LORD consecrate themselves, or else the LORD will break out against them.” 23 Moses said to the LORD, “The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for You warned us, saying, ‘Set bounds about the mountain and consecrate it.’” 24 Then the LORD said to him, “Go down and come up *again*, you and Aaron with you; but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, or He will break forth upon them.” 25 So Moses went down to the people and told them.

Deuteronomy 4:9 “Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons. 10 Remember the day you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, ‘Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.’ 11 You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the very heart of the heavens: darkness, cloud and thick gloom. 12 Then the LORD spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form—only a voice. . . .

15 “So watch yourselves carefully, since you did not see any form on the day the LORD spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire, 16 so that you do not act corruptly.

33:2 “The LORD came from Sinai . . . And He came from the midst of ten thousand holy ones; At His right hand there was flashing lightning for them. 3 “Indeed, He loves the people; All Your holy ones are in Your hand.

Psalms 28:3 The God of glory thunders. . . . 4 The voice of the LORD is powerful, The voice of the LORD is majestic. . . . 7 The voice of the LORD hews out flames of fire. 8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness.

Hebrews 4:9 “Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children’s children— 10 how on the day that you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, the Lord said to me, ‘Gather the people to me, that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children so.’ 11 And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, while the mountain burned with fire to the heart of heaven, wrapped in darkness, cloud, and gloom. 12 Then the Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the sound of words, but saw no form; there was only a voice. . . .

15 “Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the day that the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, 16 beware lest you act corruptly.

12:18 For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest 19 and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. 20 For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” 21 Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.” 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, 23 and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

25 See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. 26 At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” 27 This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore let us be grateful for

receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

Introduction/Review:

The children of Israel, ✓2.5 million of them, had traveled to Rephidim, near Mount Sinai, where two things had happened. What were the two events? Hint: One had to do with water, and one had to do with battle. [God gave water from a rock when Moses struck the rock; the Amalekites fought against stragglers at the back of the multitude; when Moses lifted his hands, God gave victory.]

As the multitude moved on to the mountain of God (Horeb/Sinai) and camped before it, someone came to visit Moses. Who was it? [Jethro, his father-in-law, who brought Moses' wife and two sons.]

Story:

It had been three months since Israel had left Egypt. If they had left in April (the first Hebrew month, Abib, is sometimes in April), that means they had traveled from April 15 to May 15 (one month) to June 15 (two months) to July 15 (three months). It was approximately mid-July when they arrived at a very important place, the wilderness of Sinai [locate]. There they camped before the mountain of God, the same mountain where Moses had met God at the burning bush. Not only Moses but also all the people were about to meet God in a way they had not seen Him before.

Moses' first ascent

First, Moses climbed the mountain to talk to God. The LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel. 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians.'"

Stop a minute. What had God done to the Egyptians? [Put them through ten plagues; slain the firstborn; drowned them in the Red Sea.]

God continued. "'And you saw how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.'"

Stop again. We haven't read about actual eagles' wings before; so think about this as figurative/picture language. Imagine the picture: People being carried on the wings of eagles. Briefly explained, this word picture shows us that God, like an eagle, affectionately and carefully nourishes and "in a remarkable manner . . . safely and swiftly convey[s]" us to where He pleases (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/exodus-19-4.html>).

When God said, "I brought you to Myself," ✓He was speaking of the very place where Israel now was camped. What was the mountain called? [The mount of *God*.] The mount of God, where God had appeared to Moses, was where He had said, "This shall be the sign for you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain" (Exodus 3:12). Well, Moses had brought the people out of Egypt; now they were about to "serve God on this mountain." God was about "to grant his presence in a very singular manner [and] to deliver his law unto them, and enter into a covenant with them, and establish and settle them as his people; so that they were a people near unto the Lord" (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/exodus-19-4.html>).

Let's get back to God's message. Note that it is a covenant—a conditional (bilateral) promise by Him to do certain things if His people did certain things. God said, "Now then, *if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant*, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (emphasis added).

Oh, this sounds like a marvelous blessing. Just what does it mean? First, what does it require of the people? [To obey God's voice and keep His covenant.] That shouldn't be too hard, should it? What is God's promise part of the covenant? That the people would be His possession—special among all the peoples of the earth. They would be a kingdom of priests—✓representing God to others, praying for them, and telling them of God's great plan. They would also be a holy nation. That means to be separated unto Him.

Did the people in Moses' day want to obey God and have this special relationship with God? Let's see.

Moses' second ascent

Moses came down from the mountain, called the elders of the people together, and explained to them all the words which the LORD had commanded. How did the people feel about God's words? They all answered together, saying, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do!"

Yahoo! It sounds as if the people want to do God's will! So Moses brought back these approving words of the people to the LORD.

The LORD said to Moses, "I am going to do something so that the people will pay attention when I speak with you and will also believe in you forever. This is what I'll do: I will come to you in a thick cloud. In preparation I want everyone to consecrate their bodies today and tomorrow by bathing and by washing their clothes. Then they will be ready for the third day, for on the third day I, the LORD, will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people."

This was a once-in-the-whole-wide-world event! God was somehow going to reveal Himself in such a way that the people would be so impressed they would never forget the experience.

However, more cautions needed to be put in place. God said, "You shall set a boundary for the people all around. Tell them, 'Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' Now, Moses, when the ram's horn sounds a long blast, the people shall come near the mountain but not too close."

How many of you have been afraid of thunder? Of lightning? Even if thunder and lightning don't scare you, you really would have been afraid that third morning, for God sent thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud *and* a very loud trumpet sound. All the people trembled—they shook with terror. But there was more: The LORD descended on the mountain in fire, and smoke from that fire ascended like the smoke of a furnace clear up to heaven. The whole mountain quaked violently!

So, pretend you were there at the foot of that mountain that was quaking violently and pouring out fire and smoke. That's not all. Hold your ears, for that trumpet sound increased and got louder and louder. Oh, how terrifying!

Moses' third ascent

At this point the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. Even he feared to go up this scary mountain. The LORD warned him again about the people's coming too close. He then told Moses, "Go down and come up again, you and Aaron, but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, or He will break forth upon them."

Moses went down to the people and warned them about getting too close. That didn't seem to be a problem.

Moses' fourth ascent

So the people stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick, dark cloud where God was. Next week we will learn that God gave a very important message.

Will the people not sin and keep the covenant they made with God? Will they remember this awesome fire, smoke, quaking mountain, and loud noise that shows the might of their great God?

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:
Moses was the go-between for God and the people. Jesus is the mediator (go-between) for God and His people—those who have trusted Christ to be their Saviour.
- Born-again believers in Jesus Christ are God's possession—special among all the peoples of the earth.

They are a kingdom of priests—representing God to others, praying for them, and telling them of God’s great plan. They are also a holy nation—separated unto the Lord.

- When we approach God, we should be “clean”; that is, we must confess and repent our sin.
- Our God is totally awesome!

Activities:

- Play dough: mountain; ram’s horn
- Snack: Bugles[®], a corn snack produced by General Mills[®] (a hot and spicy flavor to remind one of fire might be a good treat)
- Ask a trumpet player to come to class and play a long and loud blast, or do so with a ram’s horn.
- Have a Sword drill, looking up the following references: Hebrews 12:21; Deuteronomy 33:2; Psalm 29:39; Deuteronomy 4:12.
- Discuss again the likely location of Mount Sinai in Arabia. Pictures and maps found below show the difference in the appearance of the mountains and their locations.
- Review questions: (Game: Make a mountain out of felt (sides should be no more than 45 degrees). Mark nine equidistant heights on the mountain. Print, back with paper towel, and cut out the mountain climber silhouette found on the vocabulary page below. For each correct answer, the climber may advance one level up the mountain.)
 1. To what location did the people of Israel come three months after leaving Egypt? [To the wilderness of Sinai.]
 2. What are two other names for Mount Sinai? [The mount of God; Horeb.]
 3. Fill in the blanks: “You have seen what I did to the _____, and *how* I bore you on _____ wings, and brought you to _____.” [Egyptians; eagles’; Myself.]
 4. God promised that the people would become His “own possession among all the peoples, and they would be to Him a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” What was the responsibility of the people in this covenant? [To obey His voice and keep His covenant.]
 5. How did the people answer God about their part, obedience, in the covenant? [“All that the Lord has spoken we will do!”]
 6. How were the people to prepare for the meeting with God? [Consecrate themselves by bathing and by washing their clothes.]
 7. Name four of the six things that happened as God revealed Himself to the people. [Thunder, lightning, fire, smoke, loud trumpet sound, quaking mountain.]
 8. What warning did God give the people? [Not to get too close to the mountain.]
 9. How long were the people to remember this encounter with God? [Forever.]

Memory Verse[s]: (ESV)

- Psalm 29:4—The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

Handwork:

- Students will draw mountains with fire and bolts of lightning. Glue fiber fill (for smoke) to the mountain. Draw many stick figures for the multitude at the base of the mountain.

covenant

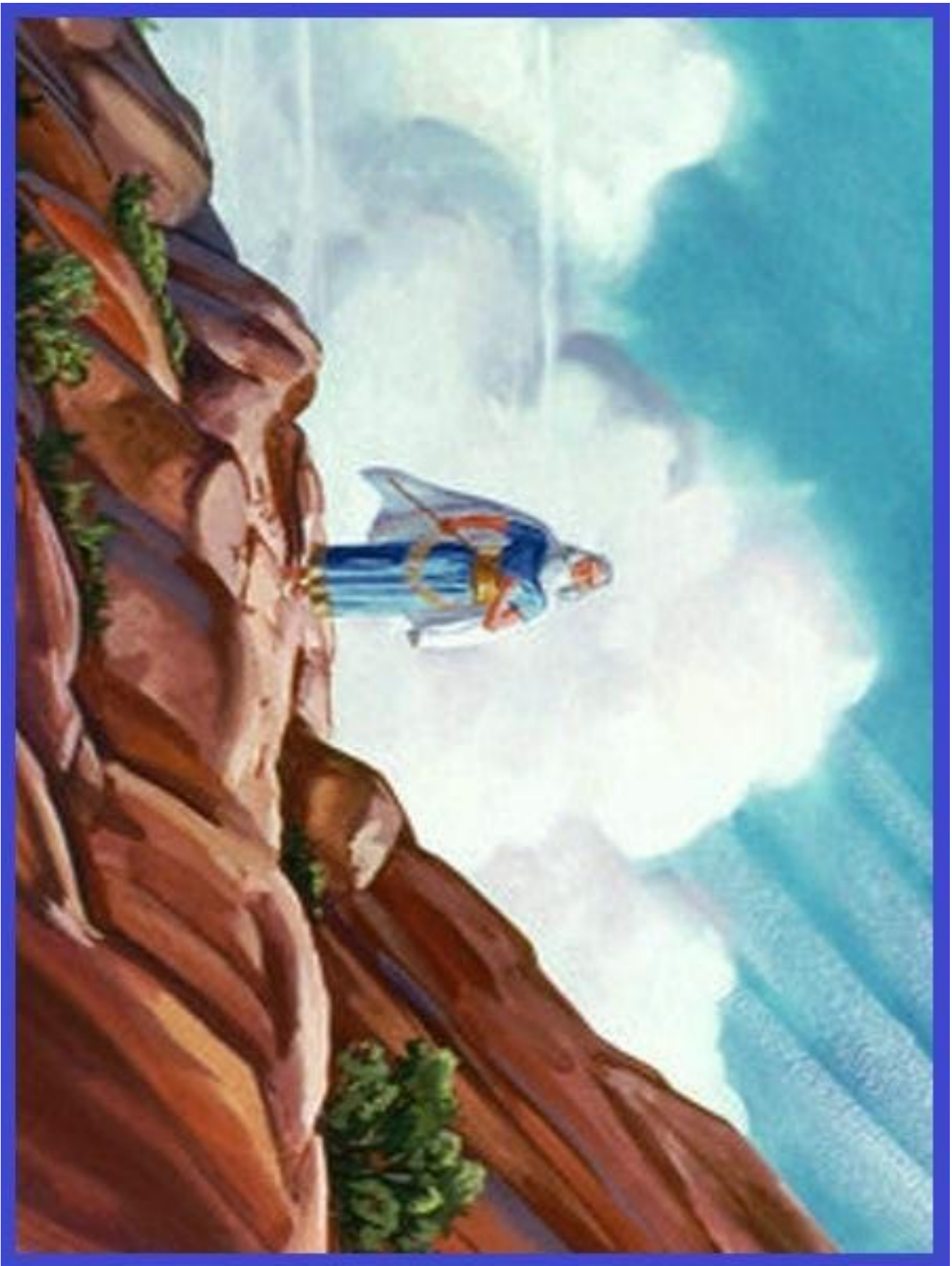
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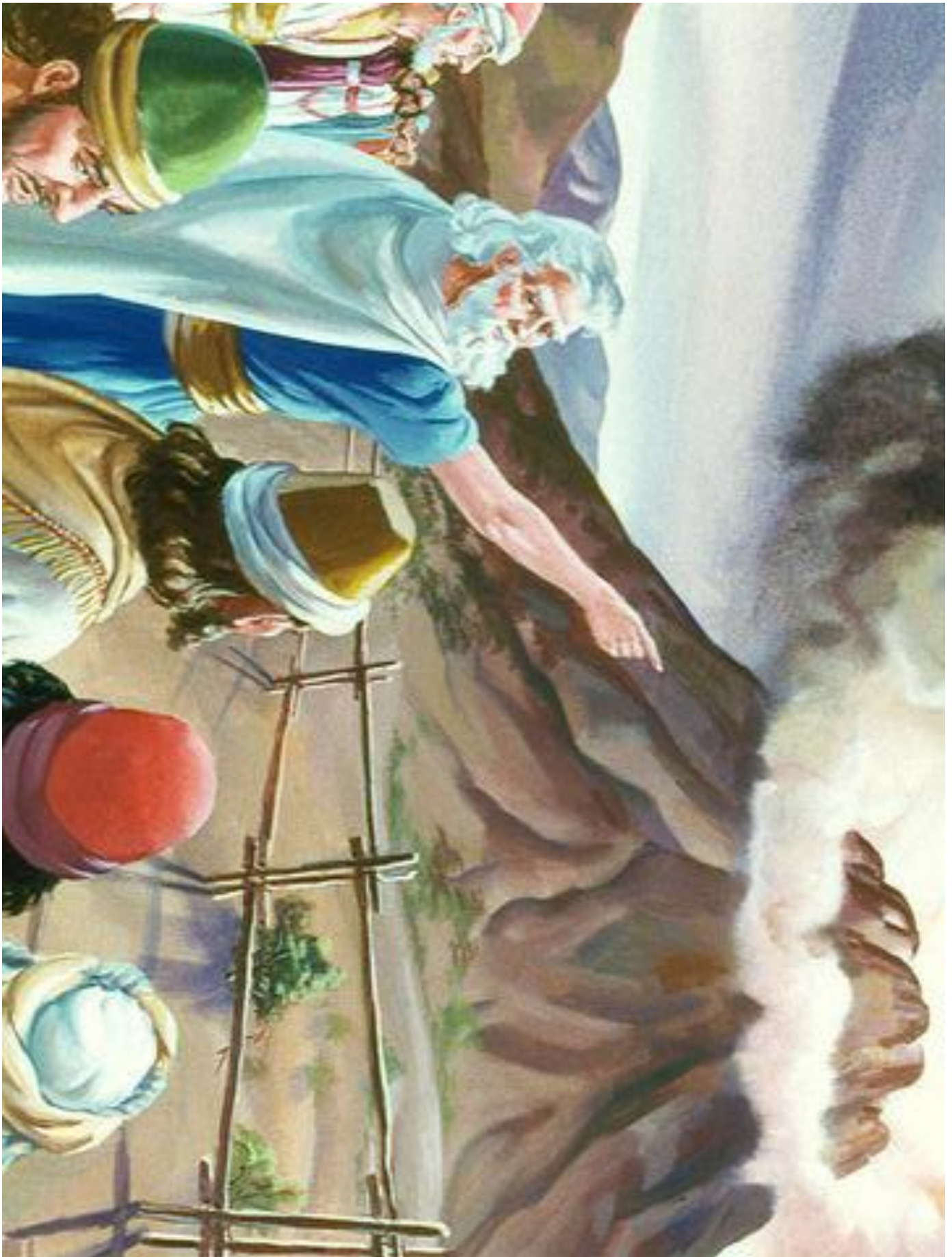




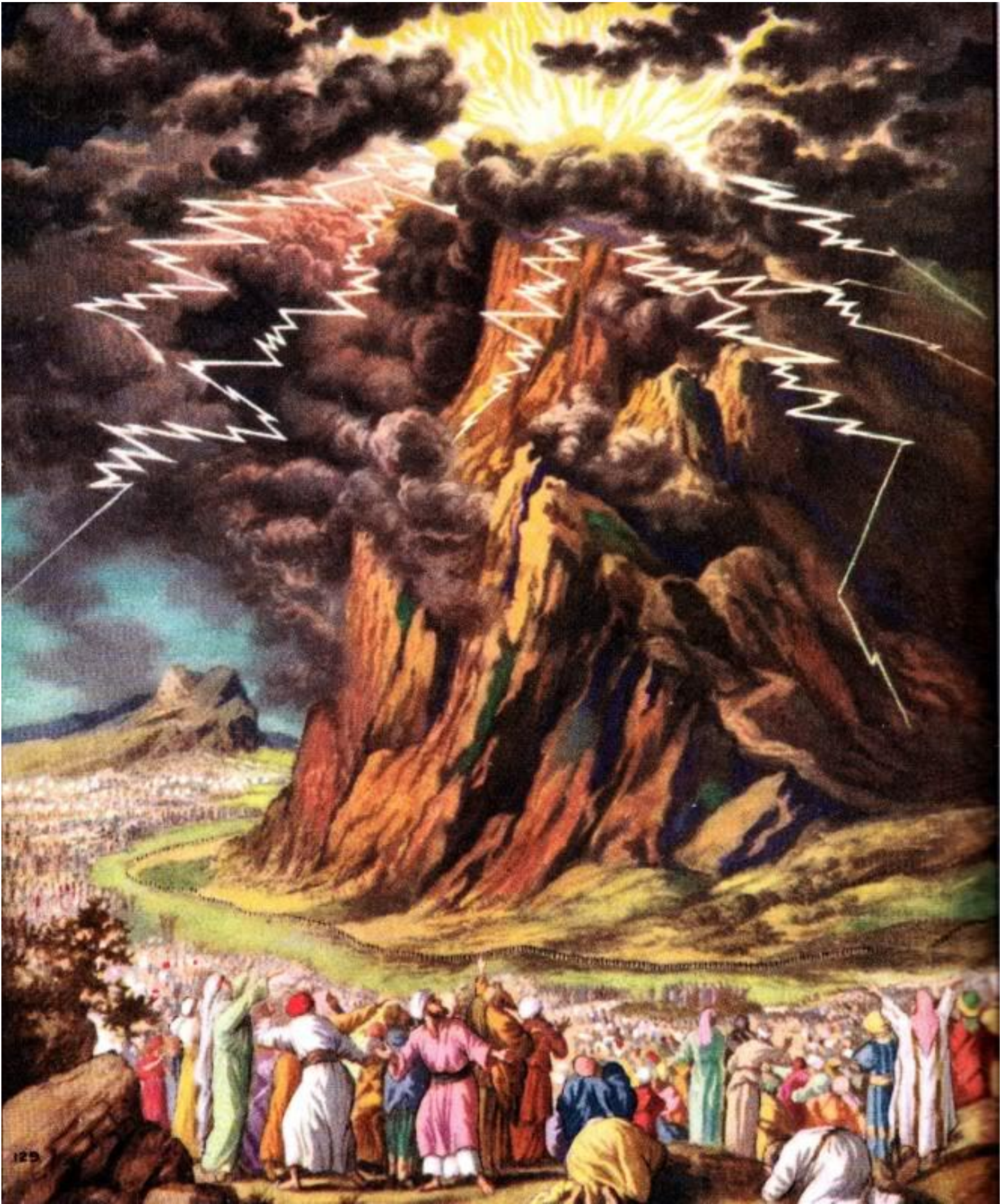
The likely route of the Israelites and the location of Mount Sinai







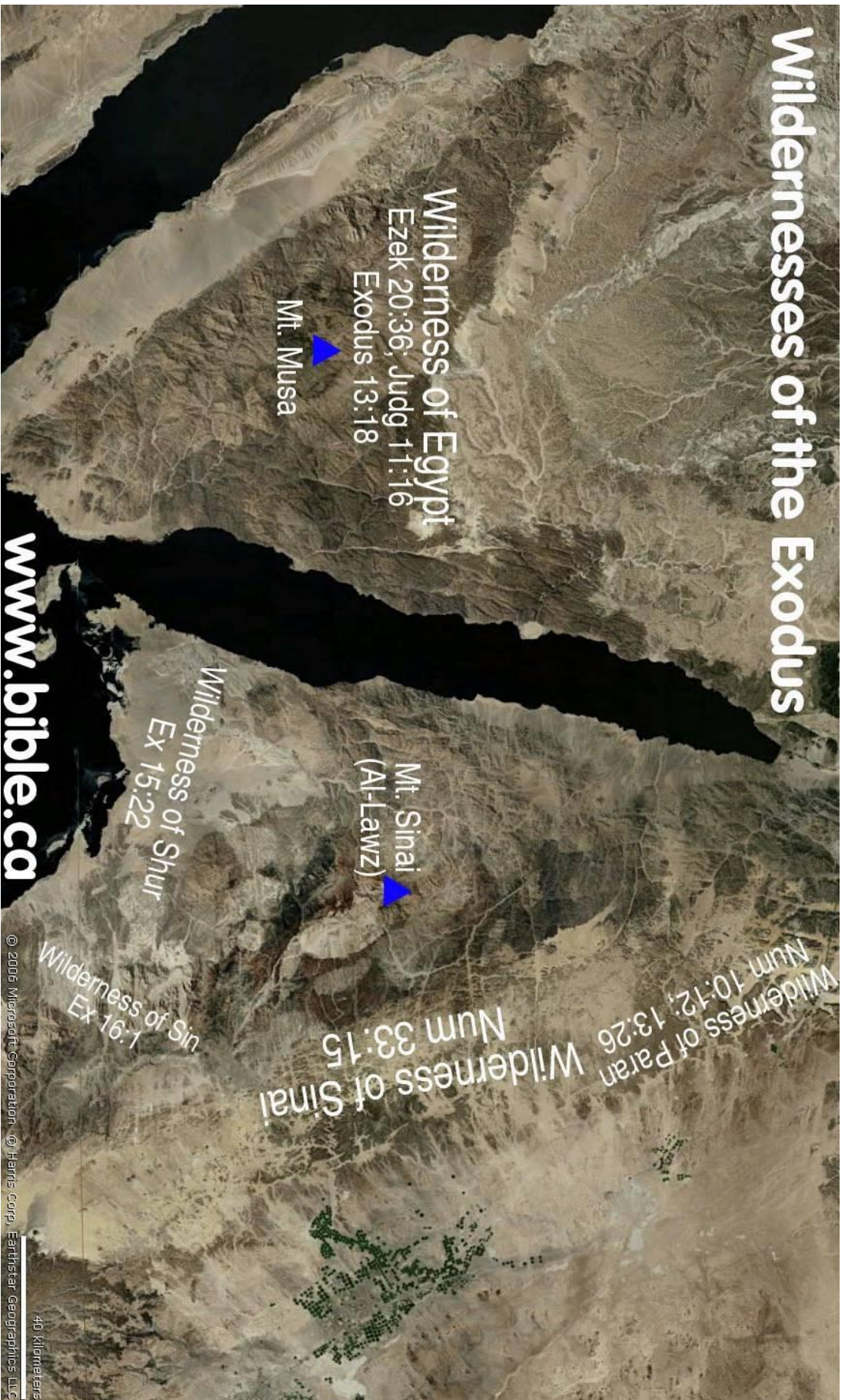




(from an old Sunday School paper)



Jebel el Lawz, which is likely the authentic Mount Sinai (burnt top; located in Arabia) (<https://wyattmuseum.com/mt-sinaijebel-el-lawz/2011-635>)



Google map showing the two possible sites for Mount Sinai (<http://www.hockeybag.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-route-mt-sinai.htm>)



Traditional Mount Sinai (<http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/mountsinai.htm>)