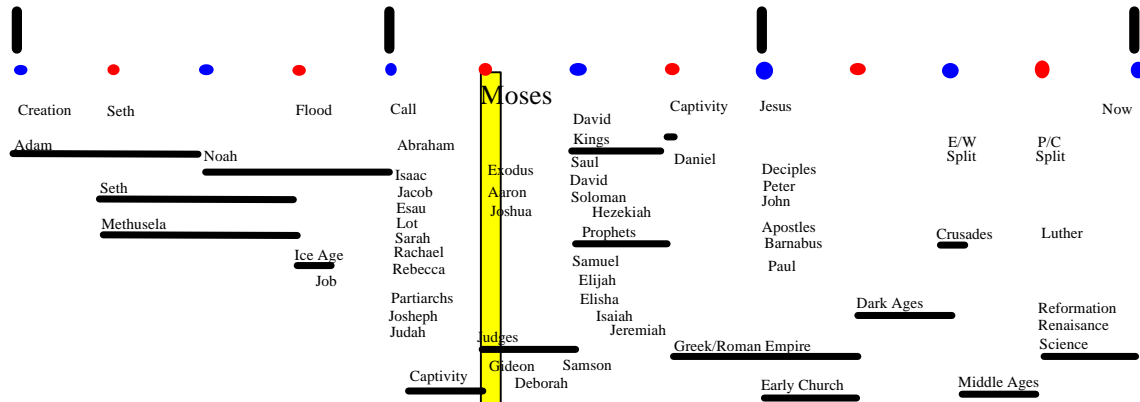


Moses

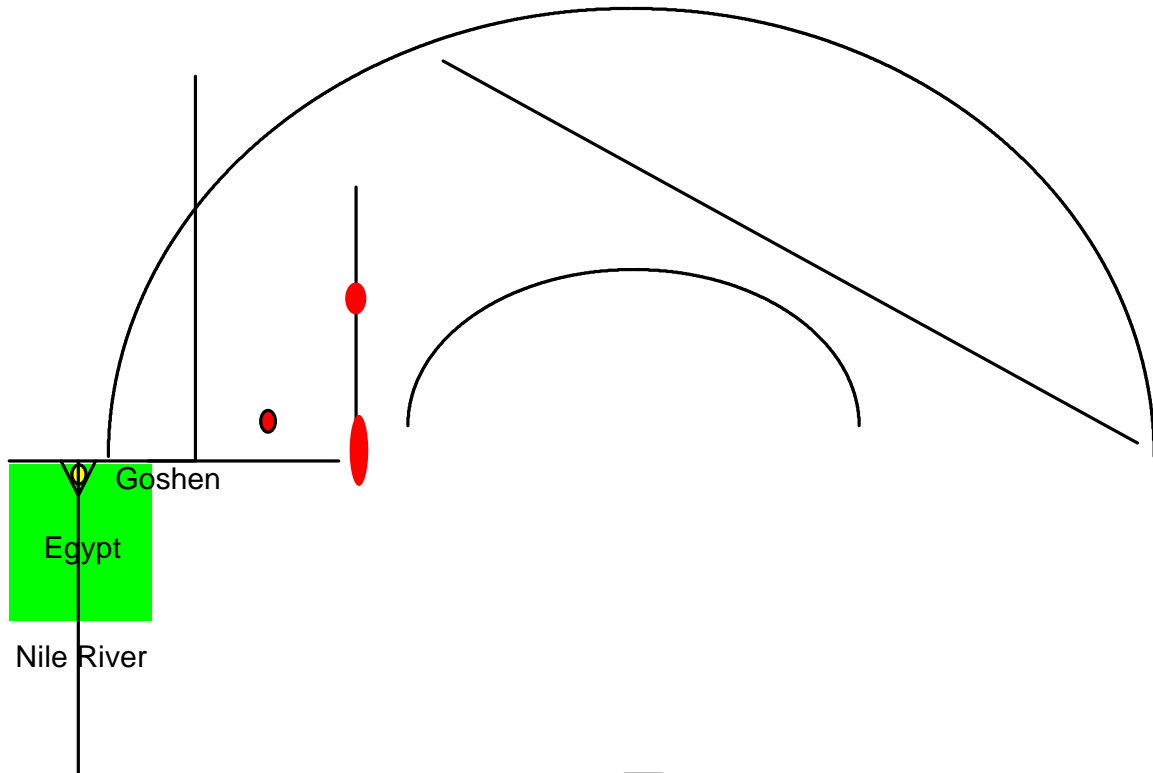
The 13 Dots of History, The Movement of God In History, The Lord of History



Moses

Exodus

Location -- Goshen



400 year Oppression

The artistic narrative begins in Exodus 1, not with data about Moses, but with an account of events in Egypt that affected Moses' people. Since the Israelites had grown to be a large people, the Egyptian Pharaoh feared their power. To control them, he launched an official policy of oppression against them.

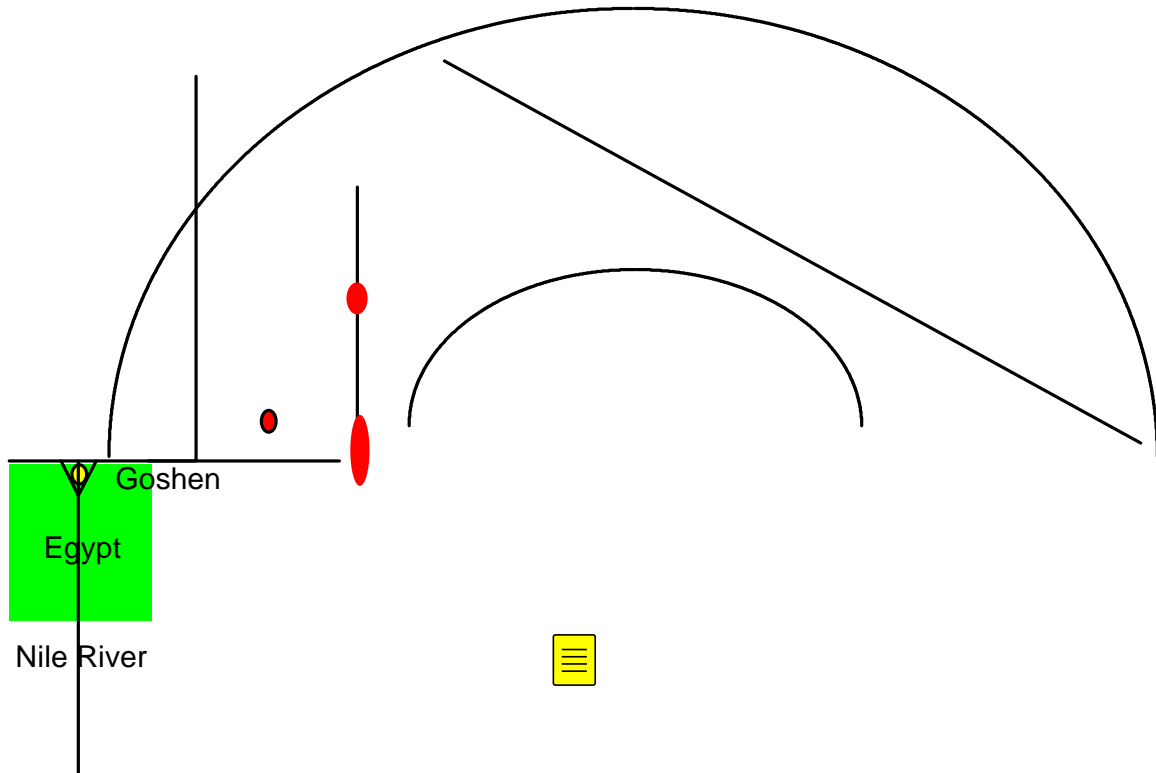
Moses' life began under the Pharaoh's judgment of death.

When the oppression failed to curb the population growth of the Israelites, the Pharaoh announced a new policy for limiting that growth. "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live" (Ex. 1:22, NRSV). The very next line announces the birth of Moses.

Moses

Moses' Birth

Location -- Goshen



Moses' Ark

The mother, however, acted to protect the baby Moses from the Pharaoh's death decree. When the baby could no longer be hidden, the mother constructed an ark, a basket of bulrushes made waterproof with bitumen and pitch. She placed the child in the basket and the basket in the river. A sister (Miriam?) stood watch over the basket to know what might happen. She witnessed an apparently terrible twist of fate, however, when the Pharaoh's own daughter came to the river. She found the ark, opened it, and recognized the child as a Hebrew.

Pharaoh's daughter disobeys her father

Rather than killing the child as her father had commanded, however, the woman showed compassion on the child, made the proper preparations, and, with the help of the baby's sister, established a procedure for adopting the baby as her own child.

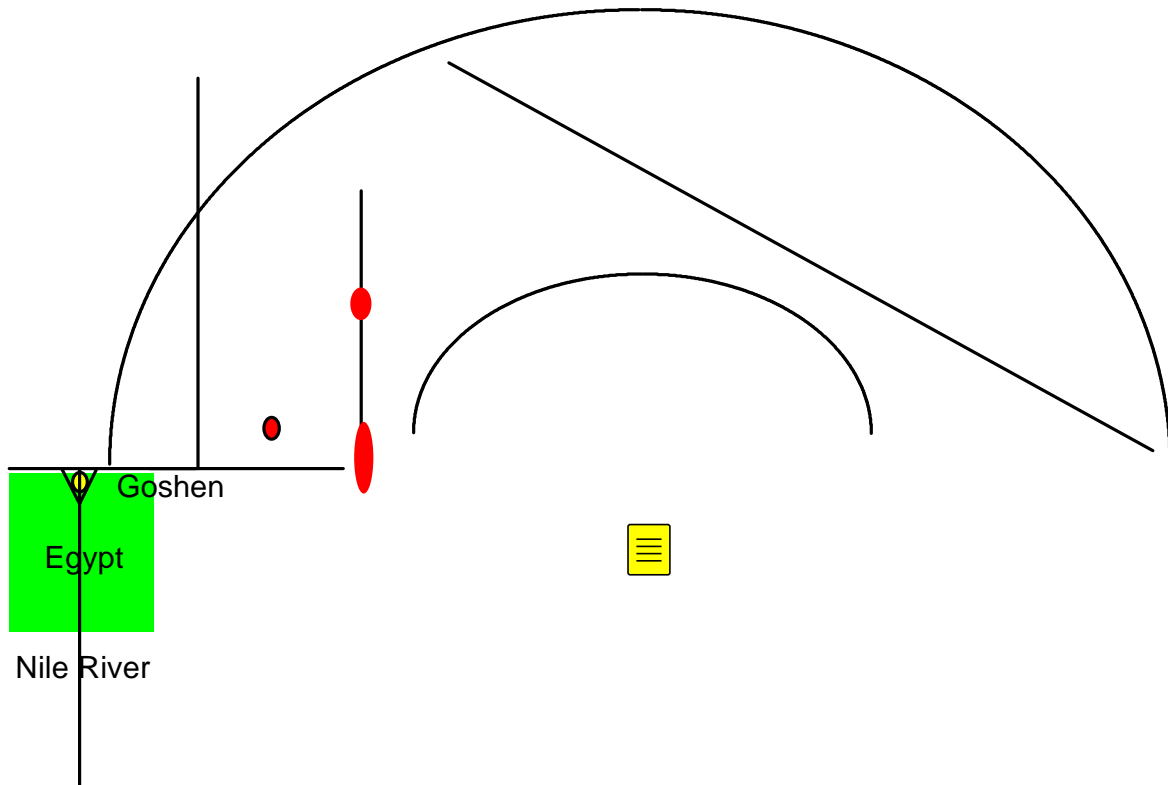
Moses' mother became his wetnurse

As a part of that process, the princess committed the child to a wet nurse suggested by the girl watching the ark. Of course, the wet nurse was the child's own mother.

Moses

Moses' Adoption

Location -- Goshen

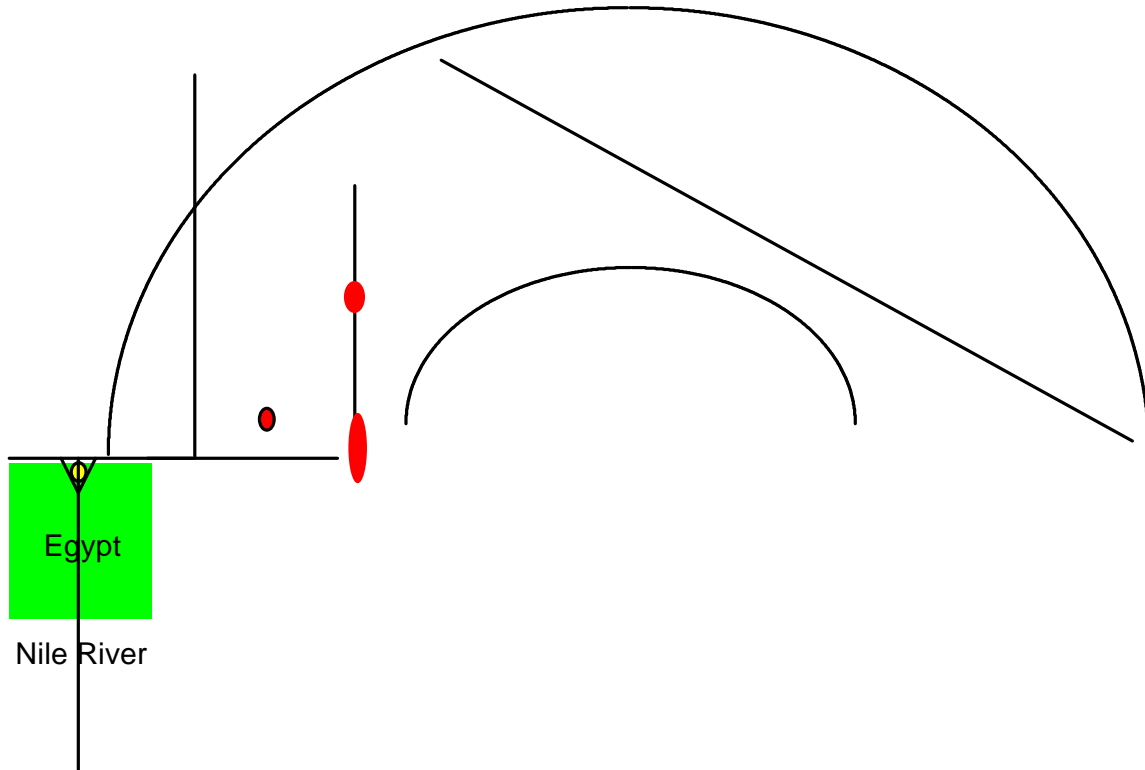


After the baby had been weaned, the mother delivered the child to the princess. As a part of the adoption procedure, the princess named the child Moses. The young hero grew to maturity in the palace of the king who had sought to kill him.

Moses

He went out to his people

Location -- Goshen



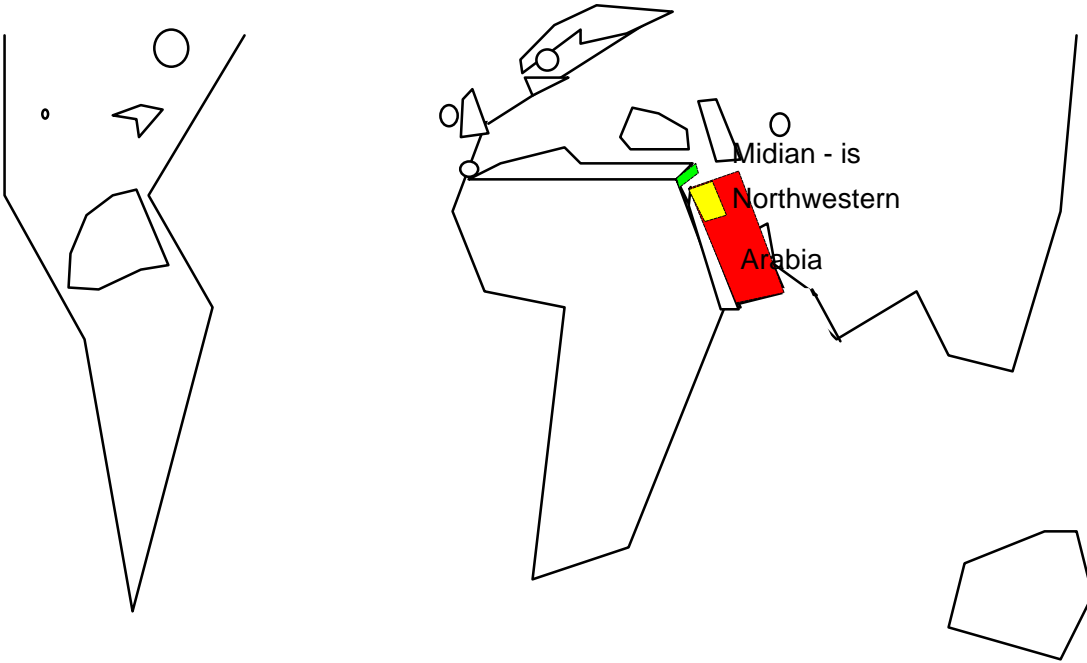
The mature Moses kills an Egyptian

The mature Moses became concerned about the oppression of his people. The storyteller emphasized the identity between the oppressed people and Moses. "He went out to his people..., and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his kinsfolk" (Ex. 2:11 NRSV, author's italics). Moses responded to the particular act of oppression against his people by killing the Egyptian.

Moses

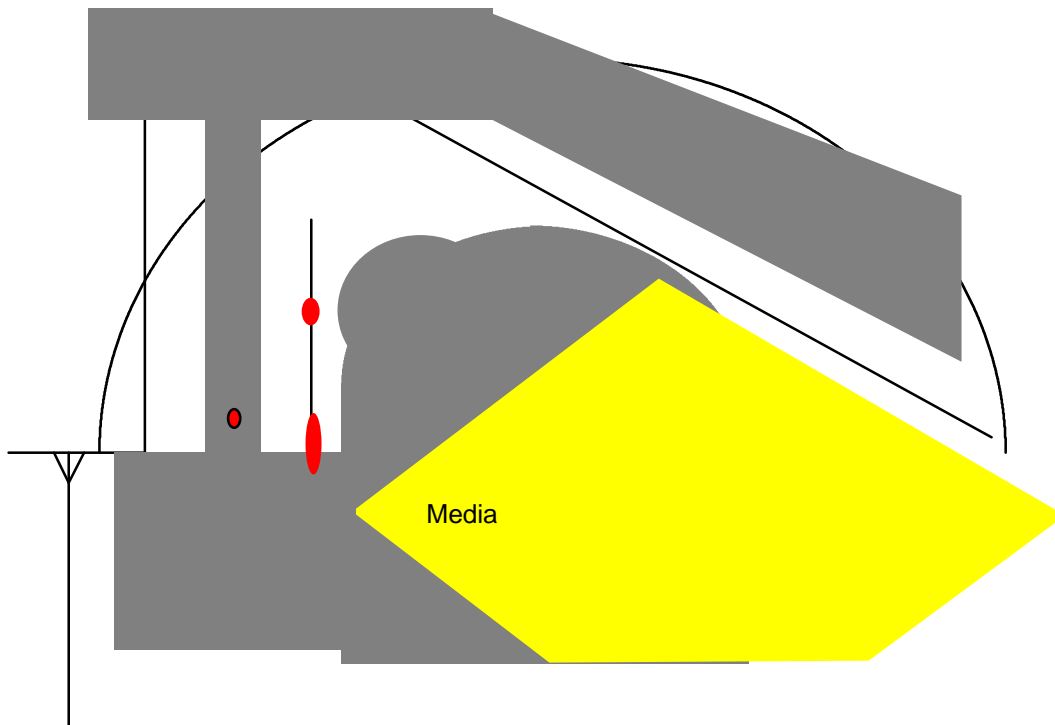
To Midian

Location -- Midian



Moses

Closer Look at Midian



Moses flees to Midian

In the wake of his violent act against the Egyptian taskmaster, Moses fled from Egypt and from his own people to the land of Midian.

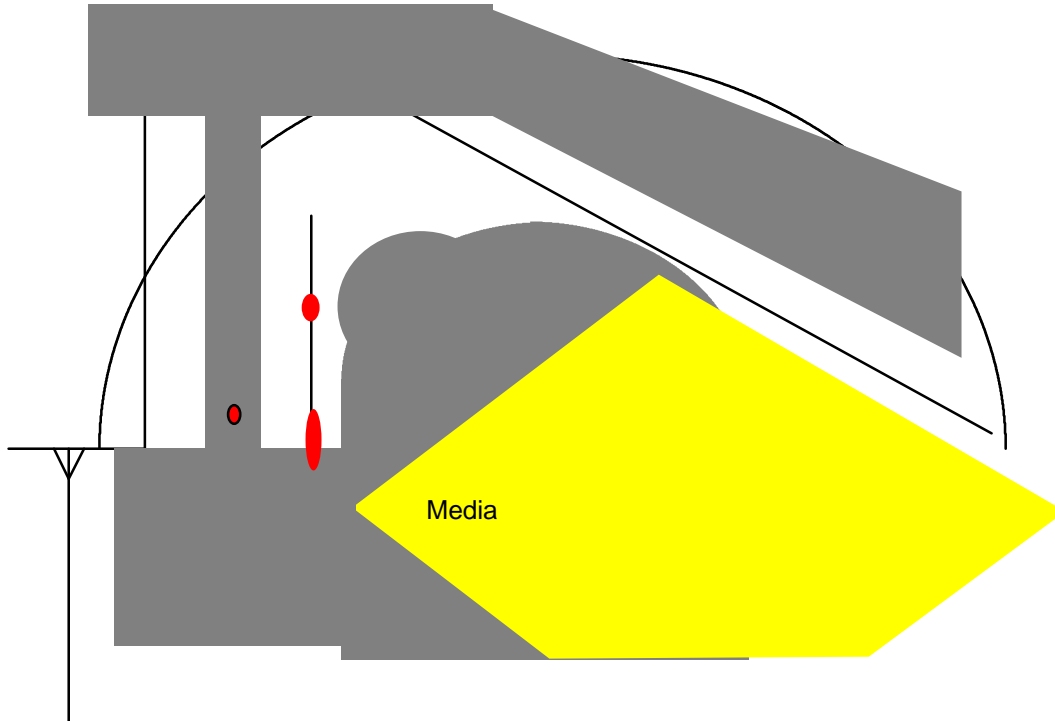
Moses intervenes again

Again he intervened in the face of oppression, inviting danger and risk. Sitting at a well, the typical meeting place for the culture (see also Gen. 29:2), Moses witnessed the violent aggression of male shepherds against female shepherds who had already drawn water for their sheep. Moses saved the oppressed shepherds, whose father, the priest of Midian, invited him to live and work under the protection of the Midianite's hospitality. Eventually one of the Midianite's daughters became Moses' wife. In the idyllic peace of the Midianite's hospitality, Moses took care of Jethro's sheep, fathered a child, and lived at a distance from his own people.

Moses

Burning Bush catches Moses' attention

Location -- Burning Bush in Midian



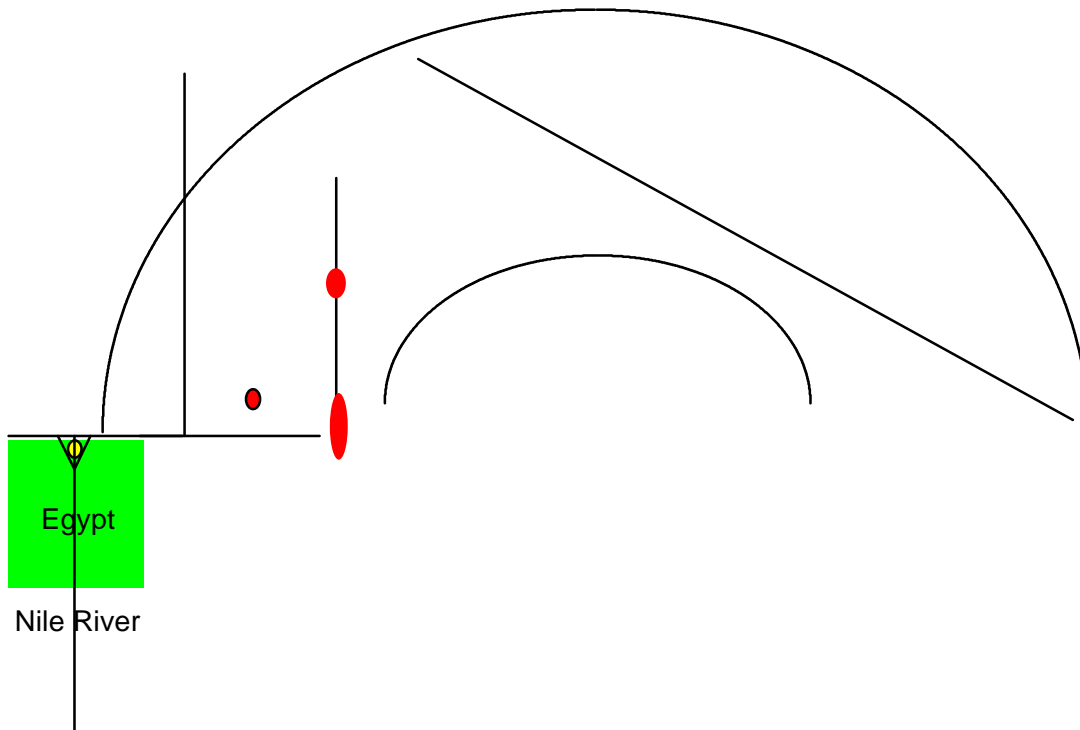
Moses Meets God, the I Am

The event at the burning bush while Moses worked as a shepherd introduced him to the critical character of his heroic work. The burning bush caught Moses' attention. There Moses met the God of the fathers who offered Moses a distinctive name as the essential key for Moses' authority--"I am who I am." This strange formulation played on God's promise to Moses to be present with him in his special commission.

Moses

Special commission

Location -- Back to Egypt and Goshen



God sent Moses back to the Pharaoh

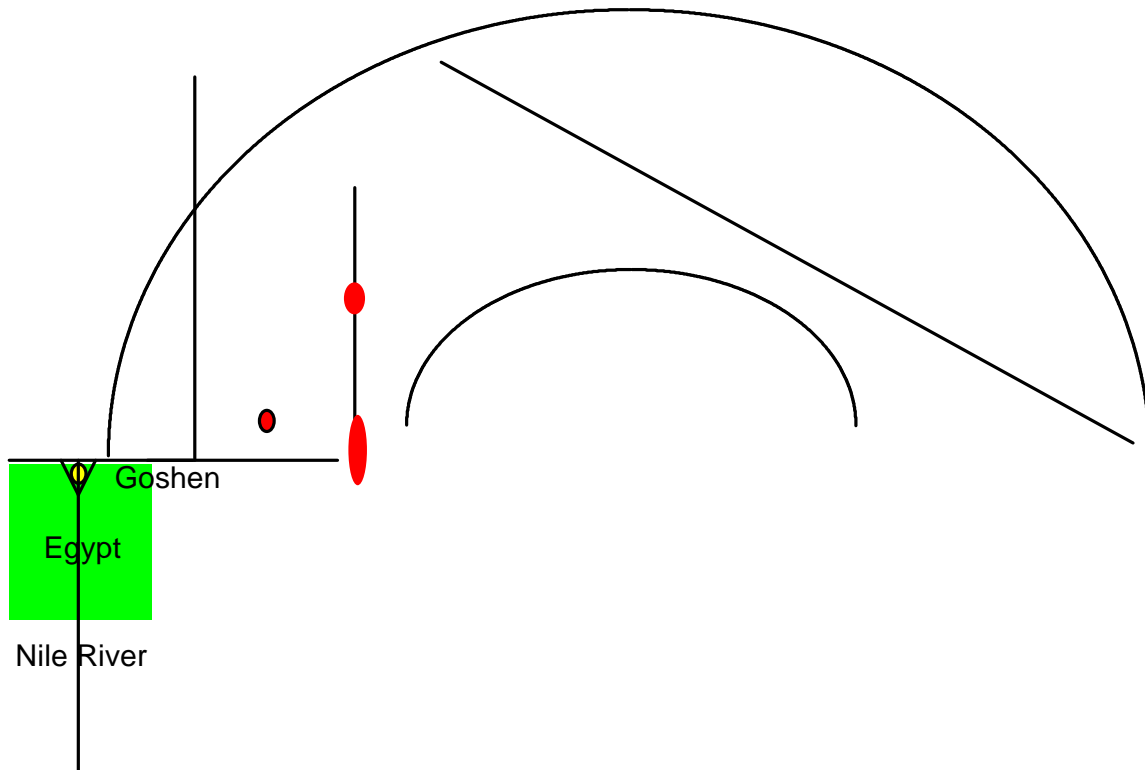
To secure the release of his people from their oppression.

The divine speech of commission has a double character. (1) As the heroic leader of Israel, he would initiate events that would lead to Israel's Exodus from Egypt. (2) As the man of God, he would represent God in delivering the people from their Egyptian slavery. With the authority of that double commission, Moses returned to the Pharaoh to negotiate the freedom of his people.

Moses

Moses fails to win release

Location -- Goshen in Egypt



The negotiation narratives depict Moses, the hero, in one scene of failure after the other.

Moses posed his demands to the Pharaoh, announced a sign that undergirded the demand, secured some concession from the Pharaoh on the basis of the negotiations, but failed to win the release of the people.

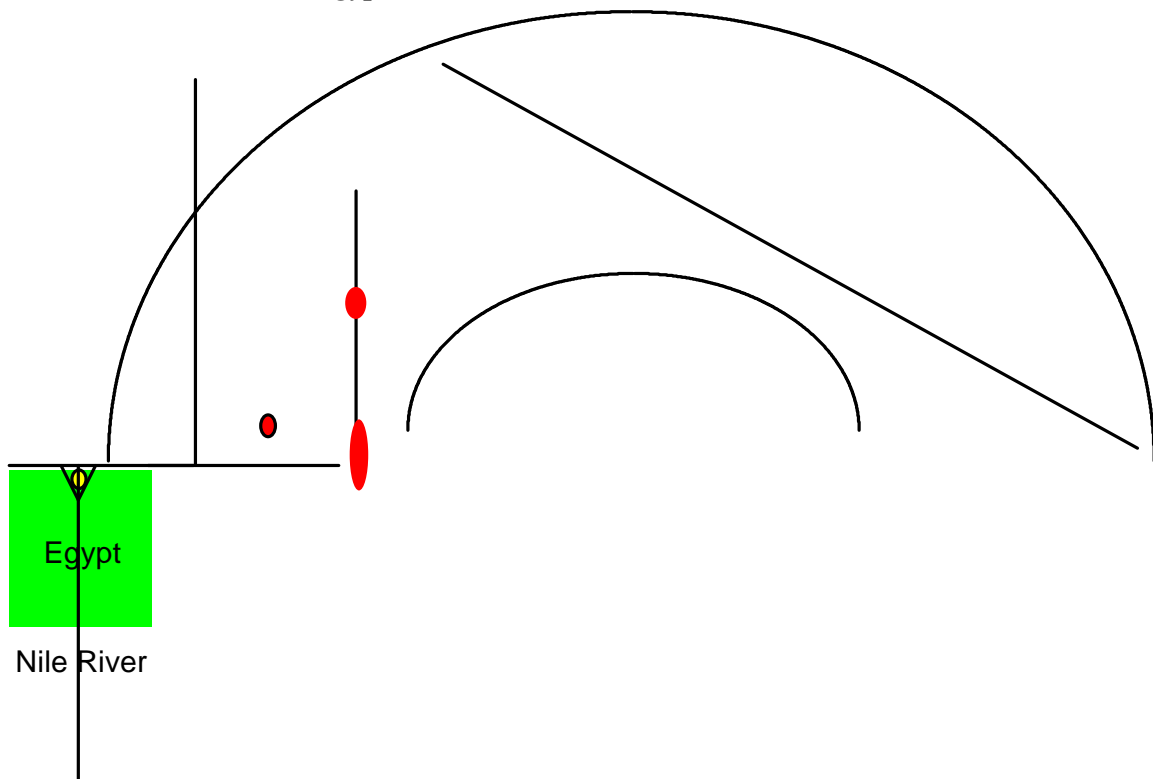
The final scene is hardly a new stage in the negotiations. To the contrary, God killed the firstborn of every Egyptian family, passing over the Israelite families. In the agony of this death scene, the Egyptians drove the Israelites out of Egypt (Ex. 12:30-36).

Behind this dominant scene of violence and death lies a different interpretation of the Exodus event.

Moses

Powerful Egypt is Despoiled

Location -- Goshen in Egypt



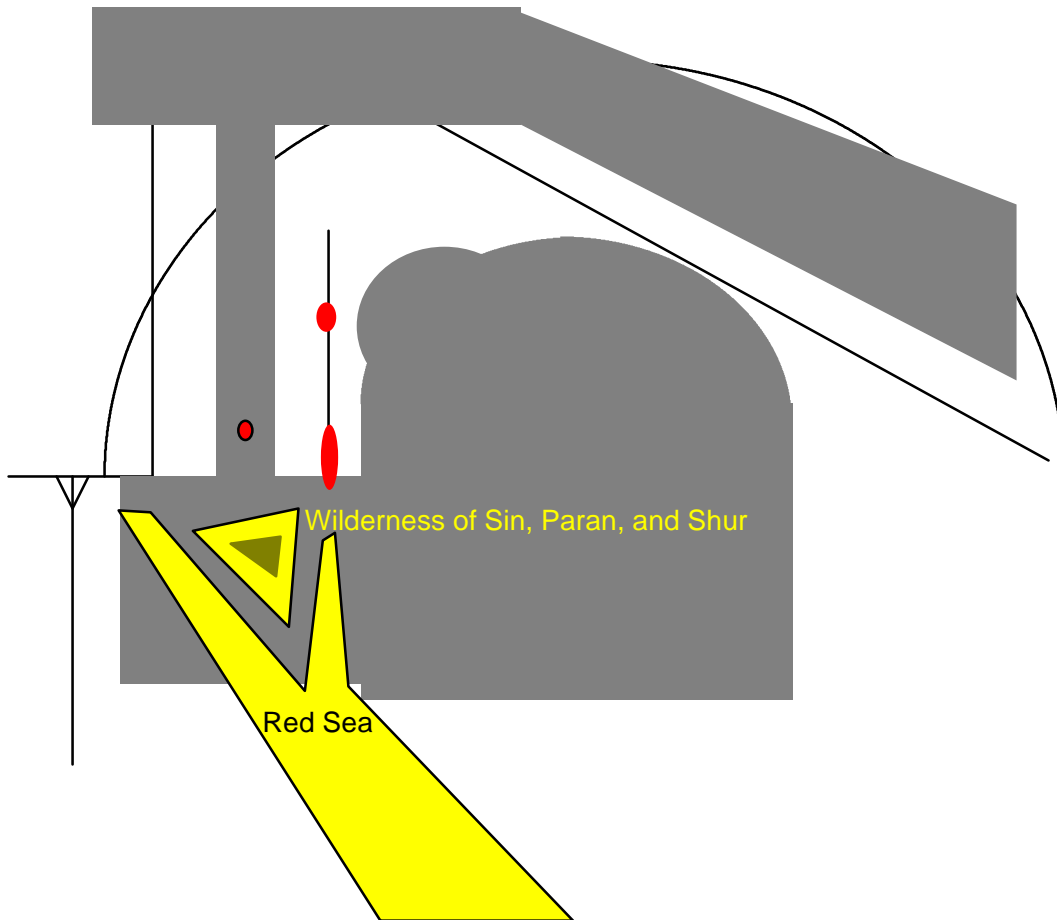
Plan for Escape includes robbing the most powerful nation of their time.

The Pharaoh closed negotiations with Moses by refusing permission for the Israelites to leave in accordance with Moses' proposition (10:28). In the wake of this failure, Moses returned to the people with a plan for escaping Egypt without the knowledge of the Pharaoh. The people borrowed silver, gold, and clothing from the Egyptians in preparation for the event. When they escaped, they took the silver, gold, and clothing with them. They despoiled the Egyptians, a sign of victory over the Egyptians. Thus in leaving Egypt, Israel robbed the most powerful nation of their time of its firstborn sons and of its wealth.

Moses

Trapped at the Red Sea

Location -- Red Sea, Wilderness



Trapped at the Red Sea

Moses led the people into the wilderness, where the pursuing Egyptians trapped the Israelites at the Red Sea. God who had promised divine presence for the people defeated the enemy at the Sea. The God proved His presence with His people.