DBQ: Should I Stay or Should I Join the Exodus Out of Egypt?

Directions: The following question is based on the accompanying documents (The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise). This question is designed to test your ability to work with and understand historical documents.

Write a response that:

- Has a relevant thesis and supports that thesis with evidence from the documents.
- Cites evidence from included source perspectives.
- Analyzes the documents by grouping them in as many appropriate ways as possible. Does not simply summarize the documents individually.
- Takes into account both the sources of the documents and the author’s points of view.

Focus Points:

- Bear in mind that you need to analyze and interpret the documents thoroughly and decide for yourself whether to take part in the Great Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.
- Time to put on your examining glasses and look through the eyes of many in order to accurately create your own vision.
- Avoid the trap of judging solely on present day values and virtues and develop an argument that is just, takes into historical events and demonstrates your mastery of the content.

Task:

For Part A, read each document carefully and answer the question or questions after each document. Then read the directions for Part B and write your essay.

For Part B, use your answers from Part A, information from the documents, and your knowledge of social studies to write a well-organized essay. In the essay you will be asked to:

- Give three reasons, explaining why you WOULD follow Moses out of Egypt and to the Promise Land OR

- Using three reasons, explain why you WOULD NOT follow Moses out of Egypt and to the Promise Land
Historical Context:

The Children of Israel spent much of their early existence in bondage. In spite of the oppression, they continued to grow in number and in faith. The leaders of Israel contributed a great deal to the development of a monotheistic belief system. They inaugurated concepts such as absolute morality, self-improvement, and the striving to comprehend the forces that shape one's existence.

Setting the Stage:

The Children of Israel are the sons of Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel. Joseph was one of Israel's sons and God put him in a very prominent position to save the Hebrews during 7 years of plenty and 7 years of famine. Joseph was second in command to Pharaoh and had stewardship over all of Egypt. Because of the grain that God had Joseph store during the 7 years of plenty Joseph was able to sell it and amass great fortunes for Egypt. He also brought his father (Israel) and brothers to live in Goshen, the most prosperous land in Egypt. Eventually though, Joseph and his brothers all die and so does the Pharaoh who had placed Joseph as his right hand man. Problems for Children of Israel who remain in Egypt begin when the memory of Joseph fades away.

The Egyptians enslave all of the Children of Israel and subject them to very harsh treatment. (Exodus 1:13-14).

They were very oppressed. They had let themselves become slaves. They had not remembered the promise to Abraham about occupying Canaan.

The Children of Israel cried unto God for help and He had respect unto them. Moses was born during this time when Pharaoh was having all newborn males of the Children of Israel killed. God had Moses' parents hide him for three months and then put him on a small ark and floated him to Pharaoh's daughter. He endeared himself to her and she took him in and then hired Moses' mother to continue nursing him and raise him (be the Nanny). Moses' mother taught him of his people and God and he grows up in Pharaoh's house (40 years-Acts 7:23).

One day Moses goes out to help the Hebrews and finds an Egyptian beating up on a Hebrew (the Children of Israel are also referred to as Hebrews now). When he stops the altercation he ends up killing the Egyptian and hides the body. He is discovered however, ridiculed by his people and hunted by the Egyptians so he flees to Midian. In Midian he finds a family of seven daughters, marries one of them, tends his father-in-law's sheep and has two sons. After 40 years in Midian (Acts 7:30) God gets Moses' attention via a burning bush and has him return to Egypt to lead God's people back to the land God had given them--Canaan.

When Moses returned to Egypt to free the Hebrews, no one had seen him for forty years. He was now eighty years old and was speaking to Pharaoh about a god that no one, with the exception of Moses, had claimed to have heard from in at least eighty years. This generation of Hebrews had not seen a single miracle performed.
by the god that Moses spoke of. Furthermore, they had never experienced freedom. The only life they knew was one of bondage, the life of a slave.

Document 1

The book of Numbers (which literally means ‘In the Desert’) is the fourth book of the Hebrew Bible and the fourth of five books of the Jewish Torah. Numbers details the Israelites journey in the desert on their way to Canaan Land or The Promised Land.

And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.

And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

Source: Numbers 21:4-9  Written by Moses

Based on this passage, how would you detail the journey of the Israelites?
Moses grew up in the palace of Pharaoh. He had everything at his fingertips. Being the son of Pharaoh’s daughter had its privileges as well. He had his own tutors, servants and never lacked for anything. He was taught about the Hebrew God from an early by his mother who was hired as a maiden. However, we do not know how long his mother was able to take care of him.

When he [Moses] was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers, the children of Israel. 24And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down [killing] the Egyptian. 25He supposed that his brothers would understand that God was giving them salvation by his hand, but they did not understand. 26And on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling and tried to reconcile them, saying, ‘Men, you are brothers. Why do you wrong each other?’ 27But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? 28Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’ 29At this retort Moses fled and became an exile in the land of Midian, where he became the father of two sons.

Source: Acts 7:23-29, Written by Paul the Apostle

1. Why did Moses kill the Egyptian?

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________________________________________________________________________

2. How did the Hebrews respond to the actions of Moses?

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3. What was the reaction of Moses when his people did not approve of his actions?

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The plagues as they appear in the Bible are:
  • (Exodus 7:14–25) water turned to blood killing all fish and other water life.
  • (Exodus 8:1–8:15) frogs
  • (Exodus 8:16–19) lice or gnats
  • (Exodus 8:20–30) flies or beasts
  • (Exodus 9:1–7) disease on livestock
  • (Exodus 9:8–12) unhealable boils
  • (Exodus 9:13–35) hail mixed with fire
  • (Exodus 10:1–20) locusts

1. Why do you think it took ten plagues before Pharaoh finally allowed the Israelites to leave?

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__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

2. How could the plagues have encouraged the Israelites to follow Moses?

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The Hebrews in ancient Mesopotamia were one of the first groups to practice monotheism, the worship of only one God. The Hebrews recorded their history and laws in the Hebrew Bible, which tells the story of God meeting Moses on a mountain. God gave Moses a set of laws called the Ten Commandments. These laws gave rules for how the Hebrews were to treat both God and other men.

1. Which commandment tells the Hebrews to worship only one God? Why was this significant?

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____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________

2. Which commandments specifically describe how people should treat one another?

____________________________________________________________

I. I am The Lord your God
   You shall have no other gods to rival me
II. You shall not make any graven image
III. You shall not misuse the name of The Lord your God
IV. Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy
V. Honor your father and your mother
VI. You shall not kill
VII. You shall not commit adultery
VIII. You shall not steal
IX. You shall not give false evidence against your neighbor
X. You shall not covet
The first five books of the Hebrew Bible are called the Torah. These books contain laws and teachings about how the Hebrews should act toward one another and toward God. The Torah is still considered sacred today by followers of Judaism. Torah scrolls are still handwritten. The photo shows a Torah scroll with a pointer called a yad. Jewish law requires the use of a yad so that the writing on the scroll is not touched by a human hand while it is being read.

1. What does the Jewish law requiring use of a yad tell you about the value placed on the Torah by the Hebrews?

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Document 6:

Moses wasn’t the only man who had claimed to receive laws from God. Hammurabi, a ruler of ancient Babylon in Mesopotamia, came up with a set of laws for his people to live by as well. The collection of these laws were called the Code of Hammurabi. The laws were written on a stone slab. The Babylonians believed Hammurabi received these laws from a god.

1. Based on the passage above and the picture, who do you think the two figures depicted above are?
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

2. How might it change people’s actions to believe that Hammurabi’s laws came from a god rather than from Hammurabi himself?
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

3. What are the similarities between the Ten Commandments and the Code of Hammurabi?
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_______________________________________________________________________________________
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Core-Scoring Guide for World History
Document-Based Question

Basic Core

1. Has acceptable thesis. 1 _____
2. Addresses all of the documents and demonstrates understanding of all or all but one. 1 _____
3. Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all or all but one document (Supports thesis with appropriate evidence from all but two documents) 2 _____
4. Analyzes point of view in at least two documents. 1 _____
5. Analyzes documents by grouping them in two or three ways, depending on the question 1 _____
6. Identifies and explains the need for one type of appropriate additional document or source. 1 _____

Expanded Core

Excellence
Expands beyond basic core of 1-7 points. A student must earn 7 points in the basic core before earning points in the expanded core area.

Examples:
- Has a clear, analytical, and comprehensive thesis.
- Shows careful and insightful analysis of the documents.
- Uses documents persuasively as evidence.
- Analyzes point of view in most or all documents.
- Analyzes the documents in additional ways – groupings, comparisons, syntheses.
- Brings in relevant outside information.
- Explains why additional types of document(s) or sources are needed.

TOTAL _____

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