

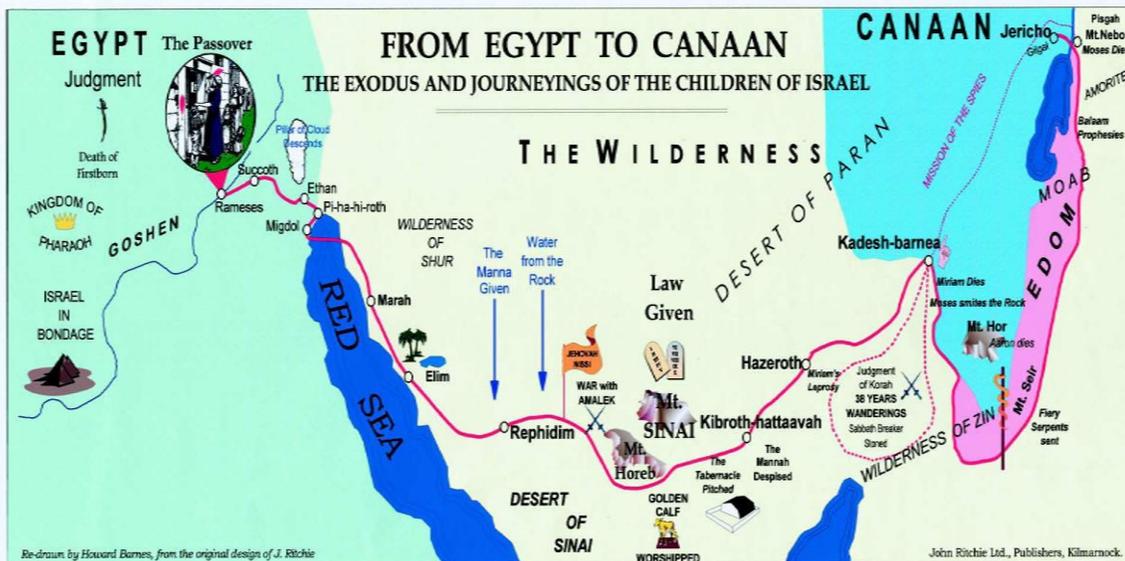
Exodus 14

Exodus 13:21-22 NKJV And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. (22) He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night *from* before the people.

The Israelites are led by the LORD by a pillar of fire and a pillar of cloud. These two pillars lead and protect them 24 hours/day and certainly is a great picture of our True Shepherd who leads us and protects us.

(Exodus 14:1 NKJV) Now the **LORD spoke to Moses**, saying:

(2) "Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea. (3 NKJV) For Pharaoh will say **of** the children of Israel, 'They *are* bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.' (4 NKJV) Then I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD." **And they did so.**



Moses is told by the LORD where to set up camp. He tells them what's going to happen next: Pharaoh will regret allowing the Children of Israel to leave and he believes that they will never get used to the wilderness (the word "bewildered" means to be entangled trying to live in the land, and therefore, they will feel closed in and trapped). Next comes the hardening of the king's heart and he will then pursue them. But this is to show the Egyptians that He and He Alone is the LORD.

Verse 4 ends with the simple "and they did so", meaning, without any resistance, the Israelites did as they were told.

(Exodus 14:5 NKJV) Now it was told the king of Egypt that the people had fled, and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people; and they said, "Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" (6) So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him. (7) Also, he took **six hundred choice chariots**, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over

every one of them. (8) And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; **and the children of Israel went out with boldness.**

So, as He had said, the Pharaoh had regrets. I don't blame him because he lost about 1,000,000 able-bodied men who were his slaves. Regrets turned into action and with a hard heart, he took 600 "choice chariots" (that is, large bullet-proof black SUV's) and the other chariots (smaller jeeps) and set out to pursue, capture and return the slaves to Egypt.

Verse 8 is interesting. The literal translation is "and the children of Israel went out with a high hand" (KJV).

The sense is rightly translated in the NLT:

(Exodus 14:8 NLT) The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, so he chased after the people of Israel, **who** had left with fists raised in defiance.

Given that they had already left Egypt, the NLT chose the word "who" instead of "and" which doesn't quite fit our understanding (and isn't in the Hebrew).

(Exodus 14:9) So the Egyptians pursued them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and **overtook them** camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon.

Pharaoh is on his way and reaches the Israelites by the sea.

BUT GOD....

(Exodus 14:10) And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. **So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD.**

They first cried out to the LORD, but then blamed and complained to Moses.

(Exodus 14:11 NKJV) **Then they said to Moses,** "Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt?

(12) *Is this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, 'Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For *it would have been* better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness."*

And so it begins. **The first of many complaints.** They remember the past but only with selective memory. Suddenly the very thing for which they cried out to God years before, now, through the lens of fear, seems "not so bad". Their cries were heard:

Exodus 3:7 NKJV And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.

Exodus 3:9-10 NKJV Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.

(10) Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My

people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

Somehow, their memories turn into mush. When Moses first encountered God in the Burning Bush. God told him something important:

(Exodus 3:15 NKJV) Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. **This *is* My name forever, and this *is* My memorial to all generations.**'"

His very Name, "I AM", was to be for the remembrance of Who He IS throughout all generations!

And before they left for the Promised Land,

(Exodus 13:3 NKJV) And Moses said to the people: "**Remember this day** in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out of this *place*. No leavened bread shall be eaten.

(Exodus 14:13) And Moses said to the people, "**Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. (14) The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.**"

Moses understood their fear. But he told them not to fear but to simply stay still before the LORD and they would see His Salvation! It would be the LORD's battle and He would be victorious!

The phrase "and you shall hold your peace" is interesting. The Hebrew word for "hold your peace" means so many things but not "peace". It can mean "to engrave", "to fabricate" but, for our context it means "to cease," "to be quiet (as in hold your tongue)" or "to be still" or "to let alone".

(Exodus 14:15 NKJV) And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. **(16)** But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea. **(17)** And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. **(18)** Then the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

I love the LORD when He mildly rebukes Moses. As I said in my title, "Quit yer belly achin' " is how I translate this verse. Moses, lift up your rod and as before, stretch out your hand over the sea. He did and the LORD fulfilled His promise to lead them into the Promised Land. The LORD said that the sea would be divided and that the Israelites would walk across on DRY LAND. Creating a way across the sea would have been enough but then He added the "dry land" promise!

This was to teach the Egyptians a valuable lesson: The God of the Israelites was the LORD of all Creation and He alone would be glorified by His miraculous deeds!

(Exodus 14:19) And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. (20) So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus it was a cloud and darkness *to the one*, and it gave light by night *to the other*, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.

The LORD who it was said to be in the pillars of cloud and fire, went from the front where He led them to the rear where He would now protect them. Many believe, and I think it reasonable, that there was only 1 Pillar. It was a cloud covering by day and a pillar of fire at time to provide light to the wanderers when they camped. In addition, it also seems to indicate that our LORD was separated from the Pillar in that He first moved behind them and then the pillar of cloud moved and stood behind them. This is the interpretation of many.

In any case, the cloud caused darkness at night for the Egyptians and the it was as a light to the Israelites so that they could not come near to each other during the night.

(Exodus 14:21 NKJV) Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; **and the LORD caused the sea to go back** by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry *land*, and the waters were divided. (22) So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry *ground*, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

An East Wind blew. Remember the locusts?

Exodus 10:13 NKJV So Moses stretched out his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind on the land all that day and all *that* night. When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.

The East wind was a symbol of judgment. It blew all night to hold back the waters on either side of a huge path. And it caused the sea bed to dry up.

The people went "into the midst of the sea" on dry ground and there was a wall of water on the right side and left side of them. They went across with the mighty wind to their backs and the Fire leading them forward...all through the night.

I don't know how long it took to get all those people across just as I don't know how wide the swath of land was. Perhaps that's part of miracle!

(Exodus 14:23) And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. (24) Now it came to pass, **in the morning watch**, that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. (25) And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

And here comes Pharaoh and his armies. They pursued the Israelites into the sea. The LORD saw them and caused a commotion among them. Chariot wheels inexplicably came off! The

Egyptians understood: it was the LORD and He was fighting for the Israelites!

(Exodus 14:26) Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen." (27) And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. (28) Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, *and* all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained.

Before the armies had the chance to retreat, the LORD told Moses to once again stretch out his hand over the sea. At dawn, the sea returned to its full depth and killed every one of Pharaoh's soldiers. None remained alive!

(Exodus 14:29) But the children of Israel had walked on dry *land* in the midst of the sea, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. (30) So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.

The Israelites were safe on the other side. They watched as the dead bodies of the Egyptian soldiers washed up on the seashore.

(Exodus 14:31) Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.

In my imagination, I see the Children of Israel standing on the other side of the sea staring in stunned silence because of what just happened. It is at these times that we truly start to doubt the reality of what we have experienced. The miraculous has a way of giving way to the reality of our 5 senses. This experience will fade in the memories of the Children of Israel as they face similar trials and tribulations. There is nothing new under the sun.

Our trials and tribulations are meant to strengthen us and to build up our faith. But Fear enters the door of our hearts and it replaces faith. Fear replaced any memories of the past to focus on what was before their eyes.

Fear is spiritual and a weapon of satan. The problem is, it affects our flesh and we "feel" it. The feelings become more real than our faith and, in a sense, overpower us. How can I not fear it I feel it in every pore of my body? It attacks my mind and clouds my thinking. This is the nature of fear.

Fear vs sight. Got met His children where they were emotionally and spiritually. They feared what was behind them and what was in front of them. In His grace He gave them another "sign" as He had done 10 times before. To the Egyptians, there were 10 plagues. To the Israelites they were supposed to be 10 proofs of His fulfilling His promises to the Patriarchs.

All they had to do was to stand still and see the salvation of the LORD. All they had to do was to stand still and be quiet. Psalm 46 could have been written when they were trapped between the sea and the armies of Pharaoh. "Be still and know that I am God; The LORD of hosts (armies) is with us; the God of Jacob is our Refuge. Selah".

But right before (at the right time!), they cried out and wanted to return to bondage. Fear clouded their memories of what God had done to the Egyptians; fear wiped out the knowledge of why God did those things to the Egyptians. They forgot that God Almighty, who freed them from bondage, would also lead, protect and sustain them until they reached the Land promised to their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Fear wiped out the hope of each tomorrow. And, what did fear give in return? Absolutely nothing.

Yes, Fear is real. We feel it in our guts. It commands our full attention. Nothing else can happen until we deal with it. We can suppress it but its tentacles stretch out and grasp hold of our sense of reality and twists and turns it, squeezes it and chokes it until all reality becomes a false reality where God's Light is pushed out and only darkness of the soul that refuses to believe or hope remains.

This is a spiritual battle that can only be fought with our best weapon: Jesus! He is the Word and the two-edged sword. We fight with His Words. We can crush the spirit of fear by what He has spoken to us in His entire Word to us: all 66 books of the Bible will teach us! It will give us the Words to fight Him and even the Words to "remind" Him of His Promises (which in reality, remind us, not Him). We need to remember:

Exodus 32:13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit *it* forever.' "

Deuteronomy 7:17-19 "If you should say in your heart, 'These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?'— (18) you shall not be afraid of them, *but* you shall remember well what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt: (19) the great trials which your eyes saw, the signs and the wonders, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm, by which the LORD your God brought you out. So shall the LORD your God do to all the peoples of whom you are afraid.

Joshua 1:13 "Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and is giving you this land.'

Are you facing a huge body of water that needs to be crossed? Are you facing a painful trial? Are you facing fears that are causing you to turn from your LORD? Are you afraid that He will remember your sin just at the moment you need Him most?

Psalms 25:6-7 Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses, For they *are* from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; According to Your mercy remember me, For Your goodness' sake, O LORD.

Then read:

Isaiah 43:25 "I, *even* I, *am* He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.

Read [Matthew 4:1-11](#). See how the Messiah dealt with satan during a time of temptation. This was all orchestrated by the Spirit who led Him out into the wilderness. When He was at His weakest, the tempter came. And Jesus calmly rebuked his every temptation with the Word of God!

Fear, he is a liar
He will take your breath
Stop you in your steps

Fear he is a liar
He will rob your rest
Steal your happiness

Cast your fear in the fire;
'Cause fear he is a liar