

## What Really Happened?

The crossing of the gulf...did God really part the waters and the Israelites crossed on the floor of this body of water?

In Exodus 19:16 and Exodus 20:18, we find that when God spoke, the Israelites were nearly scared to death; the trembled and moved back or “stood afar off.” In 1 Kings 18:39, the Israelites all fell on their faces and were terrified when they saw the fire of the Lord consume Elijah’s offering. However, in Exodus 14:15, the Lord told Moses and the Israelites to “go forward...” Given our two witnesses of how the Israelites acted in the presence of God’s divine power, if the waters were in deed parted, exposing the floor of the Gulf of Aqaba, we should expect that the Israelites would have fallen on their faces in terror of such a sight. There is no mention of the Israelites falling on their faces nor being scared to death other than their fear of the Egyptians. Furthermore, the floor of the Gulf of Aqaba would have been extremely soft from sand blown in to the water over time not to mention it would have been quite troublesome to walk through. Lastly, we need to ask ourselves, Pharaoh, being an experienced military commander, no matter the level of his hostility, would he have led his army down into something so unnatural as a dry gulf bed with water standing on either side? And just to put this in perspective, the Gulf of Aqaba at its deepest point, which would be roughly in the middle of the gulf as we view it north to south, is about 6,000 feet. Where the Israelites would have crossed, at the mouth of the gulf as it dumps into the Red Sea, is about 2,000 feet deep. Try to imagine a wall of water, 2,000 feet high on either side and the nearly 2.5 million people, young and old alike, cattle, goats, sheep, etc. having to walk down some 2,000 feet into this dried gulf bed. Furthermore, the Gulf of Aqaba is approximately 15 miles across. This probably would have done the Israelites in, who were already scared to death of the Egyptians.

Well, then what happened? How did the Israelites cross the body of water to escape the Egyptians? We read in Exodus 14:16 that the Lord told Moses to “lift up thou thy rod...over the sea...and divide it...and...Israel shall go on dry ground....” We will notice that every time the word, “ground” or “land” is used in reference to the exodus, it is in italics

## What Does It Mean?

What this means is that it is NOT in the original text. The translators added the words “ground” and/or “land” to help the text flow better when reading. If we remove the word “ground,” or “land,” the Israelites just simply went across on what seemed like dry ground. In Exodus 15:8, we are told that “...with the blast of thy nostrils, the waters were gathered together...the depths were **congealed**...” In Job 37:10, we are told that by the “...breath of God, frost is given...” In Job 38:30, we are told that “...the face of the deep is frozen...” In Exodus 15:8, “congealed” is found in Strong’s Concordance, as #H7087 and means *frozen water*. What does this mean in our text? Simply, it means that the Gulf of Aqaba was frozen in a section large enough for the Israelites to cross and in Exodus 14:22, the open water on either side was “...a wall unto them on their right...and their left.” Hence Pharaoh could not flank the Israelites, but had to fall in behind them. In Exodus 14:21, we are told that an east wind blew and made the “...sea dry *land*.” Land being in *italics* is not in the original text. The wind more than likely blew sand across the frozen water, which would have given the Israelites traction to cross, but would have caused heat and friction on Pharaoh’s chariots, causing them to have trouble in the failing ice beneath them, as we read in Exodus 14:24-25. It would have been nothing for God to have caused a polar vortex to have frozen the waters prior to the arrival of the Israelites and then after the east wind, turn the wind to the south, causing a warm up, and the ice beginning to thaw at the shallowest parts first thereby trapping Pharaoh in the “depths of the sea.” The Gulf of Aqaba is a very salty body of water and salt water needs a temperature of 28.4 degrees Fahrenheit to freeze and likewise, it thaws at lower temperatures also. As we read in Exodus 15:5, we are told that the Egyptians sank as a stone, and most likely died from hypothermia. And it was after this miraculous act of salvation, that the Israelites “...believed the Lord...” Exodus 14:31.

Yes, indeed, as the song goes, “Our God is an awesome God.” And as the Bereans of Acts 17:11, it is important for us to “search the scriptures to see if these things be so.” Isaiah 29:13, reiterated by our Lord tells us that our traditions can “make void the word of God.” May God bless you on your search for gems of truth in your Bible.



## The Red Sea Crossing

What Really Happened?

Did The Waters Part?

Did The Israelites Cross On Dry Ground?

Where Did The Israelites Cross?

In This Tract, We Examine These Questions... The Answers Might Surprise You!

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# The Song Of Moses

I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. Thy right hand, O' Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O' Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth wrath, which consumed them as stubble. And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who is like unto thee, O' Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretched out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou in thy mercy has led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation. The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the might men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O' Lord, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O' Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O' Lord, which thy hands have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

*Exodus 15:1-18*

## Introduction - What Is & Is Not There?

When it comes to reading out Bible, a lot of times we approach it with preconceived notions or understandings that have been passed down to us from family or church leaders. In most cases, this may be harmless; however, in some cases, we can find ourselves reading, not only what is in the scriptures, but also reading into the scriptures what is not there. Here are just a couple examples. Unless otherwise noted, all scripture is from the King James Version.

Genesis 1:2 tells us that the earth "was without form and void..." This leads us to believe that God created a mess and then proceeds to establish the earth in an orderly fashion. We know from 1 Corinthians 14:33 that God is not the author of confusion. And when we go to Strong's Concordance and look up the word, "was," we find that it is Strong's #H1961 and it means "to become." Hence, God created an age prior to ours and something happened that caused the earth "to become" void and without form. Another example is in Matthew 2:1 with respect to the wise men from the east that came to see Jesus. We are always told there were three wise men; however, scripture does not limit them to three nor does it give us any exact number. We are only told in verse 11 that they presented three different manners of gifts, which has led people to believe there were only three wise men. This same reading "into" the scriptures is found in our text in Exodus, which we will get to shortly.

Brevity of scriptures is another detail that we tend to overlook. In God's Word, the passage of a large amount of time can pass by in just a few short verses. An example would be in 2 Chronicles 24:2-10. In these eight verses, a time span of 23 years passes by. So too, we find a brevity of scriptures (Exodus 12 and 14) with respect to the exodus of Israel from Egypt, which was a significant event, such that all around heard of it, as we can read in various scriptures. We easily make the assumption that all the events of the exodus transpired quickly, even in the course of the night they left Egypt. However, Exodus 13:21-22 inform us that God went before the Israelites day and night in a pillar of fire and a cloud, thus indicating that this exodus took place over a course of perhaps several days, even as much as a week or longer.

## Where Did The Crossing Happen?

So, what was the exodus? How long did it take? Did Israel cross the Red Sea? Did God really part the waters as we have been taught? All good questions, some of which are beyond the scope of this study. The focus of this short study is the actual crossing of the "Red Sea."

Quickly, before we address the actual crossing, there are three possibilities for "where" the Israelites crossed the "Red Sea." The three options are: the Bitter Lakes, located to the north of the Gulf of Suez, east of Rameses, the second option is the Gulf of Suez, which runs the western border of the Sinai Peninsula and Upper Egypt, and the third option is the Gulf of Aqaba, which borders the east side of the Sinai Peninsula and the land of Midian. It is this author's conviction that the Israelites indeed crossed the Gulf of Aqaba. First, the Bitter Lakes was located less than 50 miles from where the Israelites began, in Rameses. In Exodus 14:7-8, we are told that Pharaoh took six hundred chariots and pursued the Israelites. If the Israelites left at midnight, average foot speed being 3 mph, it would have taken less than 17 hours to reach the bitter lakes. If Pharaoh pursued them hard with chariots, a single horse chariot can run as fast as 40 mph; Pharaoh would have caught and crushed the Israelites with ease and there would have been no need for God's intervention in the cloud. The second possibility is, the Israelites crossed the Gulf of Suez. This option seems more plausible; however, in Exodus 14:3, we are informed that Pharaoh thought he had Israel trapped or "shut in." As we look at a map of the Gulf of Suez, on the Upper Egypt side, there is not really any land wherein Pharaoh could have made that claim. Israel would have had wide open expansion to flee from Pharaoh. This leads us to the Gulf of Aqaba on the east side of the Sinai Peninsula. It is most plausible that Israel's camp at Migdol, Exodus 14:2, was at the very lower point of the Sinai Peninsula at the top of the "Red Sea" and "sandwiched" between the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqaba. It is this author's conviction that the Israelites did in deed cross the Gulf of Aqaba into the land of Midian, to Mount Al-Lawz (Mount Sinai/Horeb). Midian would have afforded protection from the Egyptians as well; the Sinai Peninsula would not have, given that region of land was under Egyptian control. Again, the details of the actual exodus are beyond the scope of this study.