

THE TRIUMPH OF YHWH & THE SONG OF MOSES

EXODUS 14:1-15:21

THE TRIUMPH OF YHWH

Exodus 15:1-21

14:1-4 ¹ Then the LORD said to Moses, ² “Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon; you shall encamp facing it, by the sea. ³ For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, ‘They are wandering in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.’ ⁴ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD.” And they did so.

A. Israel is beginning their journey to their new homeland – Canaan.

B. Moses pins FIVE geographic locations in these first 4 verses:

- 1.** “Pi-hahiroth” – Means, “Place where the sedge grows,” or “Mouth of the gorges.”
- 2.** “Migdol” – Means, “Tower,” or “Fortress.”
- 3.** “Baal-zephon” – Means, “Lord of the hidden things.”

The exact locations of “Pi-hahiroth, Migdol, and Baal-zephon” are debated by historians and archaeologists.

4. “The sea” – The Red Sea.

5. “In the land” – In Egypt.

C. Scholars offer THREE possible routes Israel traveled from Egypt to Sinai.

1. FIRST – *The Northern Lagoon Route*

a. This option proposes that Israel left Ramses in the Nile Delta and traveled northeast near the Mediterranean coast, toward the coastal lagoons.

b. Those who favor this route argue that the Hebrew words “yam sup” are mistakenly translated “*Red Sea*” in the Old Testament and should be the “*Reed Sea*.”

c. This view teaches that Israel crossed through a shallow lake that was exposed by the wind; the Hebrews walked through a wide marsh filled with reeds.

d. For those who hold this view, how an entire Egyptian military unit drowned in 4-10 feet of water is still a matter of discussion and debate.

2. SECOND – *The Gulf of Suez Route*

a. This second option proposes Israel traveled South from Egypt and crossed the *Northwestern arm of the Red Sea*, known today as the *Gulf of Suez*.

b. This route is called the *Traditional View* because it has been traditionally held by early Judaism and Christianity for centuries.

c. This view prefers the translation of “*yam sup*” as “*Red Sea*,” not “*Reed Sea*.”

i. Those who hold this view argue that “Papyrus – Reed – Sea” is an Egyptian reading of “*yam sup*,” but Moses’ Hebrew audience would have read it as, “*Sea at the End*.”

ii. “The ancients used the name *yam sup* to describe the body of water that lay beyond the farthest lands known to them. It meant the sea at the end of the world.”¹ — for the Hebrew slaves in Egypt, this would have been the *Red Sea*.

iii. The Biblical narrative seems to support the *Red Sea* over the *Reed Sea*. Here are FOUR reasons:

aa. *The Plain Reading of the Text*

Exodus 14 describes Israel crossing through a large sea.

¹ Constable, Tom. *Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible*. Galaxie Software, 2003; Many scholars have claimed that it came from an Egyptian root word meaning “reed.” But this writer showed that it came from a Hebrew root word meaning “end.” *Yam* is also a Hebrew word that means “sea.” The “*yam sup*” is then the “Sea at the End.” The ancients used the name *yam sup* to describe the body of water that lay beyond the farthest lands known to them. It meant the sea at the end of the world. It clearly refers to the Red Sea often in the Old Testament (Exod. 15:4; Num. 21:4; 33:8; Josh. 2:10; 4:23; 1 Kings 9:26; Jer. 49:21; et al.).

- “Waters were divided”
- “Walls of water on their right and left” (v. 22)
- The sea “returned” and covered the entire Egyptian army (v. 28)

bb. *The Scale of the Miracle*

Moses describes the parting of the Red Sea as a miraculous, unmistakable act of God – *not* a natural event with a natural explanation.

cc. *Historical Tradition*

The Septuagint translated “*yam sup*” as the “*Red Sea*,” and the New Testament writers wrote about Israel crossing through the Red Sea (Acts 7:36, Hebrews 11:29).

dd. *Total-destruction of Egypt’s Army*

dd-I. The Red Sea story emphasizes the *complete destruction* of Pharaoh’s forces – not one survived (Exodus 14:28).

dd-II. Traditional view argues that deep water better explains *total annihilation* – *not* just soldiers stuck in mud or shallow flooding.

3. THIRD – *The Gulf of Aqaba Route*

a. This third option proposes Israel traveled Southeast and came to the *Northeastern arm of the Red Sea*, known today as the *Gulf of Aqaba*.

b. Those who hold this view trace the Exodus of Israel from Ramses in the Nile Delta traveling Southeast across or around the Sinai Peninsula to the Nuweiba Beach on the Gulf of Aqaba.

c. THEN – Israel crossed through the Red Sea on an exposed natural underwater shelf.

d. People claim that chariot wheels and wheel-axils covered by coral have been found in the Gulf of Aqaba.

e. This option became popular in the 2001 documentary called *Exodus Revealed*.

4. CONCLUSION: I am interested in *The Gulf of Aqaba Route*, and I will let each of you decide which Exodus route you prefer.

14:5-9 ⁵When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, “What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” ⁶So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, ⁷and took six hundred chosen chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. ⁸And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out

defiantly. ⁹The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

A. CRISIS – It appeared that God led Israel to a dead-end.

1. It appears that Israel was led into a geographic “Kill-Box.”
2. Israel was “trapped” between “Pi-hahiroth, Migdol, and Baal-zephon,” with the Red Sea before them, and Pharaoh and the Egyptians behind them.

Matthew Henry – The fright that the children of Israel were in when they perceived that Pharaoh pursued them, v. 10. They knew very well the strength and rage of the enemy, and their own weakness; numerous indeed they were, but all on foot, unarmed, undisciplined, disquieted by long servitude, and (which was worst of all) now penned up by the situation of their camp, so that they could not make their escape. On the one hand was Pi-hahiroth, a range of craggy rocks impassable; on the other hand were Migdol and Baal-zephon, which, some think were forts and garrisons upon the frontiers of Egypt; before them was the sea; behind them were the Egyptians: *so that there was no way open for them but upwards, and thence their deliverance came.* ²

B. *Behind this terrifying scene, however, God is present and in control.*

² Henry, Matthew. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume.* Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994. Print.

C. HERE – YHWH set the stage for the *final and triumphant* deliverance of Israel from Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

1. In Exodus 6:6-7, YHWH assured His people –

a. “I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”

b. This promise extends to this moment in **Exodus 14**.

2. AFTER THIS MOMENT IN HISTORY – Israel will no longer be looking over their shoulders in fear of Pharaoh and the Egyptians as they travel to the Promised Land – “**For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again**” (v. 13).

D. YHWH is about to rescue Israel in the most dramatic way so that –

1. He would be ultimately glorified above Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt,

a. “**I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD**” (v. 4).

b. “I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen” (vv. 17-18).

2. His people would know and remember that their God who delivered them is worthy of their trust and obedience,

3. His people would know and remember that God is truly and fully able to fulfill His covenant-promise of bringing His people into the Promised Land,

4. The enemies of Israel would fear and tremble before YHWH and His people as they travel to and in the Promised Land,

Joshua 2:9-11 – [Rahab] said to the men, “I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction. And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.

5. His people would know and remember that their God loves them.

Psalms 136:1-15 – Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. Give thanks to the God of gods, for

his steadfast love endures forever. Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever ... to him who divided the Red Sea in two, for his steadfast love endures forever; and made Israel pass through the midst of it, for his steadfast love endures forever; but overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, for his steadfast love endures forever...

14:10-14 ¹⁰ When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. ¹¹ They said to Moses, “Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” ¹³ And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”

A. Israel responded to this crisis with FEAR.

1. FEAR fixates its focus and attention on the external crisis – “The people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly.”

2. FEAR complains and accepts defeat rather than celebrate and proclaim the LORD’s victory.

B. Moses charged Israel to respond with FAITH.

1. Someone once said, “When FEAR comes knocking on the door of your life, then have FAITH answer it, and you’ll find no one there.” FAITH and FEAR are mutually exclusive.

2. FAITH LOOKS UP TO GOD – “See the salvation of the LORD...”

a. BY FAITH – We see God’s deliverance, not our defeat, demise, and death.

b. **Hebrews 11:29** – *By faith* the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.

3. REAL FAITH IS IN YHWH.

a. Faith *in itself* is power-less – Faith *in God* is power-full.

b. Our faith does not bring salvation, God does.

c. Our faith is set and settled – convinced and confident – in our mighty, faithful God who can and will save His people.

d. *Wherever* we are in life – *whatever* is happening in life – *however many* enemies attack us in life – we can and should trust in YHWH our Savior – CHOOSE FAITH OVER FEAR.

i. “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. ... The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent – just stay calm ^{NLT}.”

ii. ALSO –

aa. Deuteronomy 20:3-4 – Hear, O Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint. Do not fear or panic or be in dread of them, for the LORD your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory.

bb. 2 Chronicles 20:15 – Thus says the LORD to you, “Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God’s.”

cc. 2 Chronicles 32:6-8 – Then Hezekiah encouraged them by saying: “Be strong and courageous! Don’t be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria or his mighty army, for there is a power far greater on our side! He may have a great army, but they are merely men. We have the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles for us!” Hezekiah’s words greatly encouraged the people. ^{NLT}

dd. Romans 8:31 – If God is for us, who can be against us?

14:15 ¹⁵ The LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward.

A. There is a time to STAND STILL (WAIT) and PRAY, AND there is the time to BELIEVE and TAKE ACTION.

C.H. Spurgeon – “*Why are you crying out to me?*” Spiritual people in their distresses turn at once to prayer, even as the stag when hunted takes to flight. Prayer is a never-failing resort; it is sure to bring a blessing with it. Even apart from the answer to our supplications, the exercise of prayer is healthy to the person engaged in it. Far be it from me ever to say a word in disparagement of the holy, happy, heavenly exercise of prayer. *But there are times when prayer is not enough—when prayer itself is out of season.* We may think that a hard saying, but my text is to the point. Moses prayed that God would deliver his people; but the Lord said to him, “*Why are you crying out to me?*” *As much as to say this is not the time for prayer, it is the time for action.* “Tell the Israelites to break camp.” When we have prayed over a matter to a certain degree, it then becomes sinful to tarry any longer; our plain duty is to carry our desires into action, and having asked God’s guidance, and having received divine power, to go at once to our duty without any longer deliberation or delay. ³

B. APPLICATION:

- 1.** Generally, *Fear* keeps us stalled but *Faith* gets us moving.
- 2.** Is there something God is telling you that time for prayer is done, and time for action is here – it is time to move forward by faith?

14:16-20 ¹⁶ Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground.
¹⁷ And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his

³ Spurgeon, *The Spurgeon Study Bible: Notes*. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017. Print.

horsemen. ¹⁸ And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

¹⁹ Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, ²⁰ coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

A. The *pillar of cloud and fire* represented *God’s presence and protection*.

B. God set a supernatural barrier between His people and their enemies.

1. God’s enemies were lost and confused in *darkness*.

2. God’s people could see God’s deliverance in the *light*.

3. Warren Wiersbe – The workings of the Lord are darkness to the world, but light to God’s people. ⁴

14:21-25 ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. ²² And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³ The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. ²⁴ And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, ²⁵ clogging

⁴ Wiersbe, Warren W. *Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993. Print.

their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.”

A. THIS WAS A SUPERNATURAL, MIRACULOUS EVENT THAT DEMONSTRATES GOD’S GLORY AND POWER.

1. Nehemiah 9:9-11 – You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea, and performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted arrogantly against our fathers. And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day. And you divided the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land, and you cast their pursuers into the depths, as a stone into mighty waters.

2. Psalm 106:8-12 – [YHWH] saved [our fathers] for his name’s sake, that he might make known his mighty power. He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry, and he led them through the deep as through a desert. So he saved them from the hand of the foe and redeemed them from the power of the enemy. And the waters covered their adversaries; not one of them was left. Then they believed his words; they sang his praise.

B. APPLICATION:

1. OBSERVE – God did *not* remove the obstacle that was in the way of His people, *but He opened-up a way through it.*

2. NORMALLY – This is how our deliverance happens – God does not remove our problems but makes a way through them – and He remains with us in and through every one of them.

3. God promised His people – Thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass *through* the waters, *I will be with you*; and *through* the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk *through* fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. *For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior...*” (**Isaiah 43:1-3**).

4. *By faith, let’s follow God the Savior through every crisis moment of our lives – in our journey towards our Heavenly Homeland.*

14:26-31 ²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.” ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal course when the morning appeared. And as the Egyptians fled into it, the LORD threw the Egyptians into the midst of the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen; of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained. ²⁹ But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

³⁰ Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, so the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

GOSPEL PICTURE:

1. FIRST – SALVATION

Warren Wiersbe – We must grasp the spiritual meaning of this event. The crossing of the Red Sea is a type of the believer’s union with Christ in death to the old life and resurrection to a whole new life. Israel was “baptized unto Moses” (identified with Moses) in going through the waters, and we are identified with Christ and therefore separated from the world (Egypt). The Egyptians could not pass through the sea because they had never been sheltered by the blood.

*Passover illustrates Christ’s death for us, while the crossing of the Red Sea pictures His resurrection. The blood has delivered us from the penalty of sin and the resurrection, from the power of sin. The first experience is substitution, for the lamb died in the place of the firstborn. This is Romans 4–5. The second experience is identification, for we are identified with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection; and this is explained in Romans 6–8.*⁵

2. SECOND – BAPTISM

a. ISRAEL

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 – I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. *They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*^{NIV}

⁵ Wiersbe, Warren W. *Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1993. Print.

b. CHURCH

Romans 6:3-4 – ...don't you know that *all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus* were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ^{NIV}

c. APPLICATION:

i. First, redemption from Pharaoh, then baptism in the Red Sea.

ii. After conversion, the next step for all new Christians should be water baptism.

aa. Matthew 28:19 – Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... ^{NIV}

bb. Acts 2:38 – Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ... ^{NIV}

THE SONG OF MOSES

Exodus 15:1-21

15:1-18 ¹ Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying...

A. FIRST – THIS IS A SONG OF SALVATION – SALVATION SINGS PRAISE.

1. Psalm 40:1-3 – I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.

2. C.H. Spurgeon – “If I did not praise and bless Christ my Lord, I should deserve to have my tongue torn out by its roots from my mouth. If I did not bless and magnify his name, I should deserve that every stone I tread on in the streets should rise up to curse my ingratitude, for I am a drowned debtor to the mercy of God—over head and ears—to infinite love and boundless compassion I am a debtor. Are you not the same? Then I charge you by the love of Christ, awake, awake your hearts now to magnify his glorious name.”⁶

B. NEXT – God’s redeemed people will sing the lyrics of this song again in the future – during the time of God’s judgment against the world.

Revelation 15:1-4 – Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.

And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. And *they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God*, and the

⁶ <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/isaiah-25/>

song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.”

C. LISTEN TO THE SONG OF THE REDEEMED...

- 15:1-21** ¹ “I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.
- ² The LORD is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation;
this is my God, and I will praise him,
my father’s God, and I will exalt him.
- ³ The LORD is a man of war;
the LORD is his name.
- ⁴ “Pharaoh’s chariots and his host he cast into the sea,
and his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea.
- ⁵ The floods covered them;
they went down into the depths like a stone.
- ⁶ Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,
your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.
- ⁷ In the greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversaries;
you send out your fury; it consumes them like stubble.
- ⁸ At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up;
the floods stood up in a heap;
the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.
- ⁹ The enemy said, ‘I will pursue, I will overtake,
I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them.

I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.’

¹⁰ You blew with your wind; the sea covered them;
they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

¹¹ “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?
Who is like you, majestic in holiness,
awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?

¹² You stretched out your right hand;
the earth swallowed them.

¹³ “You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have
redeemed;
you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.

¹⁴ The peoples have heard; they tremble;
pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia.

¹⁵ Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed;
trembling seizes the leaders of Moab;
all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.

¹⁶ Terror and dread fall upon them;
because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone,
till your people, O LORD, pass by,
till the people pass by whom you have purchased.

¹⁷ You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain,
the place, O LORD, which you have made for your abode,
the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.

¹⁸ The LORD will reign forever and ever.”

¹⁹ For when the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen
went into the sea, the LORD brought back the waters of the sea upon them,
but the people of Israel walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea. ²⁰ Then
Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand,

and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. ²¹ And Miriam sang to them:

“Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.”