

# THE WATERS OF HIS EARTH

## Part I: The Red Sea



Dry land accounts for only 30% of the earth's surface, the rest is oceans, rivers, and lakes. This makes water the most abundant molecule on the planet, and the most important. Without water, man cannot survive for any great length of time. Water means life.

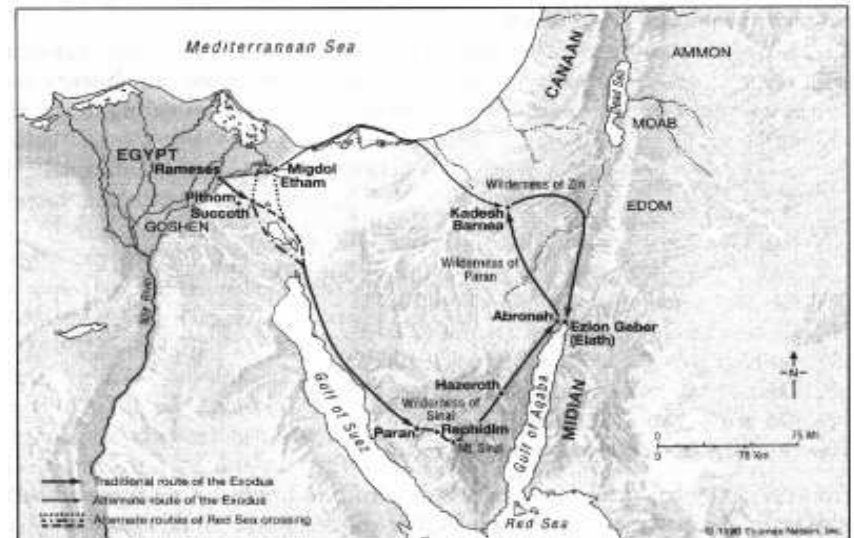
Many bodies of water are mentioned in the Bible. This series takes a look at a few of them and discovers what works of God took place in and around these waters. We will use the geographical locations to remind us of the Lord's mercy and grace toward His people.

## The Red Sea

The Red Sea, as the name is translated in many Bibles, refers to the long arms of ocean separating Asia from Africa and stretching out on both sides of the Sinai Peninsula. Today the western "arm" is called the Gulf of Suez and the eastern the Gulf of Aqaba. It is likely that the designation Red Sea was applied to both at various times in history. In New Testament times, Red Sea referred to the western gulf.

The name translated "Red Sea" comes from the Hebrew name "Yam Suph" which actually means "Sea of Reeds" or "Sea of Weeds." It was apparently named from the wool-like weeds that grow there.

Crossing or navigating the gulf can be quite dangerous. Sudden changes in wind direction and strength can make trouble for boats.



It appears as though the head of the gulf once went as much as 50 miles further north, connecting with the Nile Delta. Isaiah predicted a change in the delta when he wrote (11:15), "And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with His scorching wind He shall shake His hand over the River, and shall strike it into seven streams, and make one tread it with shoes." and in 19:5, "And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall fail and dry up."

## The Great Crossing

By far the most memorable Bible lesson concerning the Red Sea is when God caused the water to part so the Israelites could cross in safety on their way out of Egypt. Exodus 14:21-28:

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. And the LORD caused the sea to recede by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the sons of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground. And the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued and went after them to the middle of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And in the morning watch it happened that the LORD looked to the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the army of the Egyptians. And He took off their chariot wheels, and made them go heavily, so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians. And the LORD said to Moses, Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea. And the sea returned to its strength when the morning appeared. And the Egyptians fled against it. And the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the middle of the sea. And the waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. There did not remain so much as one of them.

## What Do We Learn?

The crossing of the Red Sea was a great miracle. What does it teach us about our God? What does it teach us about the way God keeps His promises? What does it teach us about God's love for His people?

Israel would never forget the crossing of the Red Sea. It was a miracle that would go down in their history forever. Even other nations heard of it. See Dt 11:4, Josh 2:10, Josh 4:23. Time and again the prophets, psalmists, and New Testament writers referred to this great miracle and what it taught the people about the power and love of their God.

When God released the nation of Israel from bondage in Egypt, that was a great thing, but we enjoy an even greater "Exodus." We have been released from the bondage of our sins by the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has given us an escape that trumps all, making it possible for us to cross the cold river of death and enter the mansions of heaven! That's a greater crossing than any Red Sea!

## Resources

<http://clipart.crossmap.com/image/1046690531.htm>  
*Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts*, 1996  
*The Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia*, S. Fallows, ed.