### **Parting of the Red Sea**

And 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 dry land, and the waters were divided. And the Children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. **(Exodus 14:21-22)**

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**The shores of Chindo Island were bustling with an odd excitement that day. The rocky beach of Hoedong Village, normally quiet except for the rhythmic lapping of the waves, was crowded with sightseers coming from as far away as Seoul, Japan and even the West. It was raining; the morning’s drizzle turning to heavy drops as the day wore on. The gray sky and ponderous sea were indistinguishable. Despite the inhospitable weather, however, the spectators waited, their vividly colored umbrellas bobbing as they shifted impatiently in the rain. Finally, it started. Around five o’clock, the sea stirred, and as if fumbling with its skirts, it gradually revealed itself to the anxious onlookers. As the sea divided, a land bridge was formed between Hoedong and Ttisom across the strait. The brightly colored crowd, many clad in long fishing boots, scrambled over the rocks onto the emerging bridge, scooping up the luckless octopuses and sea creatures that were stranded as the water receded. Squeals of delight rose here and there as happy scavengers gathered the fresh seaweed, kelp and oysters, treasured ingredients of every Korean’s diet. Just 30 minutes after the water began to ebb, the bridge was complete. The throng of sightseers let out a shout, running to meet their comrades from Ttisom Island in the middle, exchanging handshakes and exclamations about this great mystery of nature. The amazing spectacle did not last long, however. In just a little over an hour, the vast ocean, like a shy bride embarrassed by the curious stares, discreetly moved to cover itself. Once whole again, the sea drove the spectators back to shore and left them wondering if they had really seen this extraordinary miracle afterall. Every year in the mid to latter part of the second\d or third lunar months. In 1988, April 17 and 18 by the Gregorian calendar, the sea between Hoedong Village and Ttisom Island divides, creating a 2.4 kilometer long land bridge, much like that described in the Old Testament. This bridge, 30 to 60 meters in width, is called by many “Korea’s Miracle of Moses.” It is said that the miracle occurs because of the special topography of the region and because of a gathering of gravitational forces as the result of the relative positions of the sun and moon at one particular time of the year. (Kim Young-uk, in Kadeidoscene magazine)**

**Sophisticated computer calculations indicate that the biblical parting of the Red Sea, said to have allowed Moses and the Israelites to escape from bondage in Egypt, could have occurred precisely as the Bible describes it. Because of he peculiar geography of the northern end of the Red Sea, researchers report in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society dated last Sunday, that a moderate wind blowing constantly for about 10 hours could have caused the sea to recede about a mile and the water level to drop 10 feet, leaving dry land in the area where many biblical scholars believe the crossing occurred. An abrupt change in the wind then would have allowed the waters to come crashing back into the area in a few brief moments, a phenomenon the Bible says inundated the Israelites’ pursuers. (Thomas H. Maugh II, in The Denver Post, March 14, 1992)**

**At a crosswalk on Ocean Drive in Corpus Christi, Texas: “To Cross Ocean, Push Button, Wait for Walk Sign.” *(Jack Eppolito, in Catholic Digest)***

**In early Christian times pilgrims surmised that the flight of Israel led them through the Red Sea. At that time they thought in terms of the northern end of the Gulf near the town of Es-Suwez, present-day Suez. The crossing could have taken place here too. Occasionally strong northwest winds drive the water at the northern extremity of the Gulf back so far that it is possible to wade across. In Egypt the prevailing wind is from the west. The east wind mentioned in the Bible is, on the other hand, typical of Palestine. (Werner Keller, in The Bible As History, p. 120)**

**Lucy: “Can you read that big again about Moses parting the sea?” Charlie Brown then reads: “And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground.” Linus: “How do you suppose Moses knew when it was safe to go across?” Snoopy: “His dog probably went across first.” (Charles Schulz, in Peanuts comic strip)**

**A newly converted hippie was very interestedly reading the Bible while waiting for transportation and every now and then would exclaim, “Alleluia, Praise the Lord, Amen,” and on and on as he read on. A skeptic heard him and came and asked what he was reading. He answered, “I am reading how God parted the red sea and let the Israelites go through -- that is a miracle!” The skeptic explained, “Do not believe everything the Bible tells you. The truth of the matter is that the body of water was only really 6 inches deep -- so it was no miracle.” The hippie nodded in disappointment but kept on reading as the skeptic was walking away feeling proud that he had set the hippie straight. All of a sudden the skeptic heard the hippie let out a big “Alleluia, Praise the Lord!” At this the skeptic came back to him and asked, “What is it this time?” The hippie said excitedly in one breath, “This one is a real miracle, God drowned the whole Egyptian army in 6 inches of water!!!” *(Tidbits)***

**A glance at the Biblical map will show that the Israelites neither crossed the Gulf of Suez nor did they go near the Red Sea, but instead they crossed this channel (or shoals) which is plainly mentioned in the fourteenth chapter of the book of Exodus. Centuries ago there were no maps, and Bible students had no knowledge of the crossing place on the Suez channel. This is why millions of people are still taught today that the Hebrews crossed in the midst of the Red Sea. Some people refuse to believe in the whole Bible and to accept this story, not knowing that the Bible never has made such a claim. (George M. Lamsa, in Old Testament Light, p. 125, 126)**

**Moses was fleeing from the Egyptians with the Israelites when he came to the Red Sea. He asked God for help and was told that there was good news and bad news. “The good news,” said the Voice, “is that I will part the sea so that you and your people can escape.” “And the bad news?” asked Moses. “You will have to file an environmental impact statement.” (John Wiley)**

**Charlie Brown: “Have you ever seen the entire Old Testament performed by puppets before?” Lucy: “No, I can’t say that I have.” Charlie Brown: “Perhaps I should warn you about this next scene.” Lucy: “What next scene?” As Snoopy performs with the puppets, he pours a bucket of water over Lucy’s head. Then Charlie Brown says: “The parting of the Red Sea!” (Charles Schulz, in Peanuts comic strip)**

**It is interesting to know that in Aramaic any body of water, no matter how small, is called a sea. For instance, the river of Egypt, the Nile, is called a sea. The term “sea" means a gathering of waters together, whether it be small or large. (George M. Lamsa, in Old Testament Light, p. 125)**

**As Moses had been a shepherd near this area for forty years, he knew the crossing place, and when he relied on God for guidance, God told him at what time to negotiate the crossing. This is why he instructed the Israelites to rise up early and to bake unleavened bread and eat hastily. Every minute was needed in order to get to the crossing place when the tide was low. God was with Moses in every way. (George M. Lamsa, in Old Testament Light, p. 126)**

**As Rose gets ready to walk into her inflatable, rubber swimming pool, she says: “Okay, here goes!” The angel appears, divides the waters, and says: “Thanks! I’m required to keep my basic miracle skills updated!” (Pat Brady, in Rose Is Rose comic strip)**  
  
**The story is told of the youngster who came home from Sunday School, having been taught the biblical story of the crossing of the Red Sea. His mother asked him what he had learned in class, and he told her: "The Israelites got out of Egypt, but Pharaoh and his army chased after them. They got to the Red Sea and they couldn't cross it. The Egyptian army was getting closer. So Moses got on his walkie-talkie, the Israeli air force bombed the Egyptians, and the Israeli navy built a pontoon bridge so the people could cross." The mother was shocked. “Is that the way they taught you the story?" “Well, no," the boy admitted, “but if I told it to you the way they told it to us, you'd never believe it." (Harold S. Kushner, in When Bad Things Happen to Good People, p. 56)**

**Nathan Paldor and Doron Nof are a pair of oceanographers who want to part the Red Sea. They theorize that if the proper weather conditions occur, the Red Sea could part again as in Moses' day. According to their article, in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society, the two scientists contend that because of the geological structure of the sea bed, a 45-mile-per-hour wind lasting for about ten hours could expose a two-mile land bridge across the body of water. (Valmarie Carson)**

**Prior to the construction of the Suez Canal, the Bitter Lakes were connected with the Gulf of Suez by high tides. Pharaoh thought that the Hebrews, being a pastoral people and strange in the land, would not understand the tides, and therefore, would try to cross through the isthmus. But Moses, being a shepherd and scientist, knew when the tides were high or low. That is why the Lord directed him southward instead of northward where the crossing was easy. (George M. Lamsa, in Old Testament Light, p. 125)**

**The Aramaic word shora, “wall,” is the same word used in speaking of a city wall, a fortification, or a fence. The reference here is to the two bodies of water north and south, namely, Lake Timsha and the tongue of the Red Sea, which were a strong defense on both sides of the fleeing Israelites. The Aramaic word for wall is esta. Shora is used metaphorically to mean protection. We often say, “He has been a wall to me,” meaning that he has given me protection. In the East people living in the walled cities are more secure than those who dwell in open towns. (George M. Lamsa, in Old Testament Light, p. 127)**

**The waters at the channel were divided when the crossing place, owing to the low tide, became dry land. The water now was on both sides of the crossing place, that is the water of the Bitter Lakes and the water at the tip of the Gulf of Suez. When the tide is high, both waters join, and the shoals are submerged. The Israelites crossed at a place about 185 miles north of the main body of the Red Sea. (George M. Lamsa, in Old Testament Light, p. 126, 127)**

**The miracle in this instance was the wind which the Lord God caused to blow at the right time. God could have dried the passage instantly or placed the Israelites on the other side without even walking on the dry land; but instead the Lord guided the people and caused natural forces to be in their favor. (George M. Lamsa, in Old Testament Light, p. 127)**

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