

## Part 2

### Crossing the Red Sea

Randy Hageman

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Part of The Epic Life of Moses

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# The *Epic* Life of *Moses*

**Many choose *not* to believe the story of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea because it sounds too incredible.**



## Ways the Israelites Could Have Gone from Egypt to the Promised Land:

- the northern and shortest route
- the central route, which cut across bleak desert lands
- the southern route, which was the longest

*17When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along the main road that runs through*



*Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest route to the Promised Land. God said, "If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." 18So God led them in a roundabout way through the wilderness toward the Red Sea. Thus the Israelites left Egypt like an army ready for battle.*

*—Exodus 13:17-18 (NLT)*

*20The Israelites left Succoth and camped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness. 21The LORD went ahead of them. He guided them during the day with a pillar of cloud, and he provided light at night with a pillar of fire. This allowed them to travel by day or by night. 22And the LORD did not remove the pillar of cloud or pillar of fire from its place in front of the people.*

*—Exodus 13:20-22 (NLT)*

**We really have no good frame of reference for understanding what these pillars of cloud and fire looked like.**



*Then the angel of God, who had been leading the people of Israel, moved to the rear of the camp. The pillar of cloud also moved from the front and stood behind them.*

*—Exodus 14:19 (NLT)*

**The pillar was, in some way, a manifestation of “the angel of God,” a title in the Bible that sometimes seems to indicate an angel, but at other times seems to point directly to God Himself.**

**The early church believed that in some of these incidents the angel was the preincarnate manifestation of the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, whom we have come to know as Jesus.**

*1Then the LORD gave these instructions to Moses:  
2“Order the Israelites to turn back and camp by Pi-hahiroth between Migdol and the sea. Camp there along the shore, across from Baal-zephon. 3Then Pharaoh will think, ‘The Israelites are confused. They are trapped in the wilderness!’ 4And once again I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will chase after you. I have planned this in order to display my glory through Pharaoh and his whole army. After this the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD!” So the Israelites camped there as they were told.*  
—Exodus 14:1-4 (NLT)

**The LORD says, “I will harden Pharaoh’s heart”.**

**We know in the case of the plagues that some indicate Pharaoh’s heart was already hardened, and in some it indicates *God* hardened it.**

*Pharaoh: ... “And who is the LORD? Why should I listen to him and let Israel go? I don’t know the LORD, and I will not let Israel go.”*  
—Exodus 5:2 (NLT)

**Pharaoh’s heart was already inclined or hardened against the Israelites, as the early chapters of Exodus show.**

**God chooses *not* to act in Pharaoh’s hard-hearted life, allowing Pharaoh to fully experience his hardened heart, the consequences of his previous choices, and let the situation run to its logical end.**

*When word reached the king of Egypt that the Israelites*

*had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds. “What have we done, letting all those Israelite slaves get away?” they asked.*

*—Exodus 14:5 (NLT)*

*6So Pharaoh harnessed his chariot and called up his troops. 7He took with him 600 of Egypt’s best chariots, along with the rest of the chariots of Egypt, each with its commander. 8The 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. 9The Egyptians chased after them with all the forces in Pharaoh’s army—all his horses and chariots, his charioteers, and his troops. The Egyptians caught up with the people of Israel as they were camped beside the shore near Pi-hahiroth, across from Baal-zephon.*

*—Exodus 14:6-9 (NLT)*



*10As Pharaoh approached, the people of Israel looked up and panicked when they saw the Egyptians overtaking them. They cried out to the LORD, 11and they said to Moses, “Why did you bring us out here to die in the wilderness? Weren’t there enough graves for us in Egypt? What have you done to us? Why did you make us leave*

*Egypt? 12Didn't we tell you this would happen while we were still in Egypt? We said, 'Leave us alone! Let us be slaves to the Egyptians. It's better to be a slave in Egypt than a corpse in the wilderness!'" 13But Moses told the people, "Don't be afraid. Just stand still and watch the LORD rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. 14The LORD himself will fight for you. Just stay calm."*

—Exodus 14:10-14 (NLT)

**Even though the Israelites had witnessed God's mighty acts through the ten plagues, it may be that their slave mentality is so entrenched that they aren't able to break out of it enough to truly trust the LORD.**

**Moses Answers the Israelites Accusations with Three Commands:**

1. "Don't be afraid."
2. "Stand still and watch the LORD rescue you today."
3. "Stay calm."

**Moses tells the Israelites they can stay calm because the "The LORD himself will fight for you."**

*15Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the people to get moving! 16Pick up your staff and raise your hand over the sea. Divide the water so the Israelites can walk through the middle of the sea on dry ground. 17And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will charge in after the Israelites. My great glory will be displayed through Pharaoh and his troops, his chariots, and his charioteers. 18When my glory is displayed through them, all Egypt will see my glory and know that I am the LORD!"*

—Exodus 14:15-18 (NLT)

*19Then the angel of God, who had been leading the people of Israel, moved to the rear of the camp. The pillar of cloud also moved from the front and stood behind them. 20The cloud settled between the Egyptian and*

*Israelite camps. As darkness fell, the cloud turned to fire, lighting up the night. But the Egyptians and Israelites did not approach each other all night.*

*—Exodus 14:19-20 (NLT)*

*21Then Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the LORD opened up a path through the water with a strong east wind. The wind blew all that night, turning the seabed into dry land. 22So the people of Israel walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on each side!*

*—Exodus 14:21-22 (NLT)*



**God's ability to control this huge body of water demonstrates His lordship over creation, just as Jesus showed when he calmed the storm on the Sea of Galilee.**

*23Then the Egyptians—all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and charioteers—chased them into the middle of the sea. 24But just before dawn the LORD looked down on the Egyptian army from the pillar of fire and cloud, and he threw their forces into total confusion. 25He twisted their chariot wheels, making their chariots difficult to drive. "Let's get out of here—away from these Israelites!" the*



*Egyptians shouted. "The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt!"*

*—Exodus 14:23-25 (NLT)*

**Reading the text closely, it says *first* the LORD "threw their forces into confusion," and damaged the "wheels" on their chariots.**

***Moses:** The LORD himself will fight for you. Just stay calm.*

*—Exodus 14:14 (NLT)*

*26When all the Israelites had reached the other side, the LORD said to Moses, "Raise your hand over the sea again. Then the waters will rush back and cover the Egyptians and their chariots and charioteers." 27So as the sun began to rise, Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the water rushed back into its usual place. The Egyptians tried to escape, but the LORD swept them into the sea. 28Then the waters returned and covered all the chariots and charioteers—the entire army of Pharaoh. Of all the Egyptians who had chased the Israelites into the sea, not a single one survived.*

*—Exodus 14:26-28 (NLT)*





**God did just what He said He would do - He fought and won the battle!**

*When the people of Israel saw the mighty power that the LORD had unleashed against the Egyptians, they were filled with awe before him. They put their faith in the LORD and in his servant Moses.*

—*Exodus 14:31 (NLT)*

**We have to act on faith in order to build faith.**

*David [to Goliath]: "... the battle is the LORD'S..."*

—*1 Samuel 17:47 (ESV)*

**God wants *you* to know that if you trust Him, if you obey Him and follow Him wherever He leads you, even through seemingly impossible waters, the battle is His!**

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**Next Week:** The Epic Life of Moses - Part 3: *Mount Sinai*