

Battle of the Red Sea

Pharaoh though warned numerous times to release God's people refuses. Now Israel is leaving and the Lord immediately warns Moses though the northern route is faster it would lead them into immediate battle and "the people would repent when they see war and return to Egypt." (Ex. 13:17)

So the Lord leads them into the wilderness. The text says they are equipped for battle. Weapons and production skill acquired from the Egyptians. In full flight they are not yet ready to fight.

Led by the fiery pillar, Israel marches seven days across the northern Sinai Peninsula. This northern route was a frequently traveled road and there is no need to follow a circular route south and then north. Besides such a route would take more than seven days and the Lord was setting an ambush and timing was everything. Several days pass before Pharaoh could get his army together.

Once on the road fast marching the Egyptians catch-up to Israel the seventh day. The Lord reveals to Moses part of the plan. The Pharaoh will be thinking, "They will be entangled in the wilderness and shut in by it." (Ex. 14:3).

The Lord's reasoning for the unleavened bread is now understandable. The supplies would have spoiled and there was not going to be anytime to stop and prepare meals. Finally, the end is in sight. The Egyptians have driven Israel into a narrow pass with unclimbable mountains on both sides and the Red Sea in front. The children of Israel are terrified.

The Lord issues commands to Moses who no doubt is just as afraid. The Lord has the Egyptians right where He wants them.

Suddenly the Angel of the Lord moves the pillar of cloud from in front to behind obscuring and separating Israel, just like a huge smoke screen laid down by modern armies in battle. At this point the children of Israel are too frightened to acquire the lessons about smoke screens.

Then the Lord has Moses stretch out his hand over the sea. The sea is held back by the Lord and then the people see the causeway just under the surface of the sea leading down into the seabed. During the night, they make the 20-mile trip on dry land that separates the two landmasses, the Sinai, and the land of Median.

As they finish crossing, the Egyptian army, with all of Pharaoh's chariot forces, composed of the cutting edge six spoke chariots, even some older eight spoke chariots along with the four spoke priestly class chariots, pursue Israel down into the seabed.

However as the last Israelite exits the seabed and the last Egyptian enter the causeway the Lord returns the sea to its bed. Caught in the overwhelming flood the entire Egyptian force dies. This total destruction of the Egyptians paved the way for the invasion of Egypt's enemies while Israel begins her basic military training.

The Red Sea battle leads to the destruction of the entire Egyptian army and their ability to make war. After the battle of the Red Sea quite possibly the enemies of the Egyptians, the Hyksos go to war against them and over run the country without any opposition leading to a new dynasty of Egyptian rulers.

Simply the Lord decisively decimated the Egyptians. This battle is so decisive that friend and foe speak of it for generations and both attribute it to the God of Israel.

Timing is important. We see the Lord's pushing. Planning, and devising, at every turn. Why? I believe the timing is critical. Not allowing Israel to stop to prepare food,

driving them onward. “Lord cannot we not take a break here, surely you can slow the Egyptians down long enough for a good meal.”

Perhaps something else is going on some missing pieces which would add much to an understanding of this miracle. God holds back the Red Sea back by what means? Whatever it was the Lord must have used natural forces to accomplish the task. Once those forces were put into motion man had to be on time.

Whatever the means used to hold back the sea it was probably put in motion at midnight of Passover at the passing of the death angel. The Lord plans ahead.

A similar situation occurs with Sodom. When the angels ascertained that judgment was necessary at the point they strike the perverts blind, maybe around 10 p.m. at that moment in Sodom certain forces of nature were set in force that could not be recalled nor slowed.

However, its course could be altered slightly, Lot had to hurry. The angel started them on their journey at dawn because that is when the city gates would open, and it was anywhere from 2 to 5 miles to safety. Lot only had a couple of hours to avoid being caught in the disaster. Whatever was set in action could not be changed because the angel kept hurrying them along.

Apparently small alterations in course could be made since the angel allowed a slight change in course at Lots request however the timing of the event could not be altered. (Genesis 19).

Maybe the seven days Noah had to wait for the flood to begin happened because the course of nature could not be set into action until everyone was aboard. Maybe the turtle

was slower than the rabbit and because the exact time could not forecast the Lord had to wait until all was finished before setting into motion catastrophic forces.

Would it be irrational to think that certain events today are caused because of prayer and when those events are placed in motion timing becomes important? It is important that we adjust our clocks to God Standard Time, neither running ahead nor behind. If so then maybe blessings and cursing would be more distinguishable.

Here at the Red Sea natural forces set in motion are not to be stopped or changed. The people had to meet the deadline. Because they were on time the Egyptians lay at the bottom of the sea instead of Israel.