Crossing the Red Sea

GraspingGod.com’s Bible Study Lesson #6.03

Crossing the Red Sea Miracle Verses:
Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today: for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you shall never see them again. The LORD will fight for you, and you shall be still." The LORD said to Moses, "Lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go into the midst of the sea on dry ground. I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall go in after them: and I will get myself honor over Pharaoh, and over all his armies, over his chariots, and over his horsemen. The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD." Exodus 14:13-18 NHEB.

Preliminary Bible Study Questions:
1) Was the life of Moses anything spectacular until God called him?
2) Did Moses or God perform the Red Sea miracle?
3) Did Pharaoh believe in God?

You've probably heard the expression, "See ya on the other side!"

That always makes me think of the crossing the Red Sea miracle.

This story does picture our spiritual lives, and crossing the sea by faith like the Hebrews, or not, as in the case of the Egyptians.

We all know the story, the events that led up to Moses' nature miracle in the wilderness. God's miracles were happening day-after-day in his quest to lead his chosen nation out of Egypt.

The Exodus sets the stage for our Bible study lesson today, and we're going to learn some neat facts and also some strong principles that will apply to our lives. Let's get started, shall we?

Life of Moses

Let's talk briefly about the life of Moses and the things that made him so special that God chose to use him as an agent of his great miracles. The Hebrews' crossing the Red Sea time period was around 1446 BC.

Moses was raised by Pharaoh's family in Egypt, even though he was a Hebrew. A series of events led to his being discovered floating in a basket in the Nile River by the Pharaoh's daughter. Moses was placed in the basket by his mother in order to escape the Egyptian sword under which all males babies were falling. So, Moses was miraculously saved, and then raised like a prince the Pharaoh's palace. Moses was also granted a wonderful education in a very protective environment (see Exodus chapters 1 & 2).
Moses grew into manhood, knowing all along that he was a true Hebrew (Hebrews 11:24). One day he was walking through the Hebrew camp and came across an Egyptian soldier and Hebrew man arguing. Moses killed and buried the Egyptian soldier, hoping no one witnessed the crime. The next day he discovered that the Hebrews knew about his murder. Moses had to flee far away into the wilderness so his crime wouldn't be discovered by the Pharaoh. He remained in the wilderness, working and building a family, for many years (see Exodus 2:11-25).

The Pharaoh had died, and it came time for God to lead his people out of Egypt so that they could serve and glorify him (Exodus 7:16). He called Moses through the burning bush miracle. A bush was burning with fire, but, Moses noticed the bush wasn't disintegrating by the fire. He approached the bush and heard God speaking to him from the bush. God gave Moses the instructions for the Exodus plan (see Exodus chapter 3). Aaron was also called to service to assist Moses in the mighty miracles that it would take to free the Hebrews.

So, we can learn from the life of Moses that God can use anyone, even a murderer, to be a conduit for his great miracles. All humans have sinful hearts, but God can change hearts, and use anyone he so desires to perform his will. Moses was sinful, but God made him righteous. Moses is now in God's presence forever (Matthew 17:1-13). God can do the same for YOU, and YOU can live with God and Moses forever (John 5:24).

**Moses Parting the Red Sea**

The Lord, Moses, and Aaron involved themselves in an incredible series of Bible miracles called the 10 plagues of Egypt (see Exodus chapters 7-11). The plagues included water turning to blood, an invasion of frogs, swarms of gnats, flies, livestock disease and death, a plague of festering human boils, hailstorm, locusts, deep darkness covering the land, and finally, the death of all first born males. Pharaoh finally succumbed to the terrible miracles and told the Hebrews to go serve their Lord (Exodus 12:31).

The first Passover celebration ended, and the Hebrews quickly departed the land of Egypt. God himself, within their midst (Exodus 14:24), led the Hebrew nation out of Egypt by a pillar of cloud for the day, and by a pillar of fire for the nights (Exodus 13:20-22). The people traveled across the Sinai Peninsula, but instead of remaining on a course that brought them north of the Red Sea, God led them south for purposes of this wilderness miracle of provision (Exodus 13:18).

They were well on their way to the Promised Land when Pharaoh had a change of heart, once again. He ordered his strongest army to pursue, capture, and return the Hebrews to slavery (Exodus 14:5-14).

The stage was now set for one of the most grandiose of all Bible miracles, the miracle of the Hebrews crossing the Red Sea. As the Egyptian army bore down on the Hebrews, God put protection behind the chosen nation (Exodus 14:15-20). This bought time for the first of the wilderness miracles to unfold.

God's great miracle of Moses parting the Red Sea finally happened when Moses waved his hand
over the water. God blew in a wind that blew all night long, turning the seabed into dry land. God performed this miracle through both a human and nature agent (Exodus 14:21). There is nothing God cannot control!

**Hebrews Crossing the Red Sea**

The Hebrew nation included roughly two million people, so this was no small miracle. The Red Sea was also wide where they crossed, about a half mile, adding to the amazing feat of God's miracle.

The crossing site has been discovered in the town named "Nuweiba." The full name of the town is Nuwayba’ al Muzayyinah, which literally means “waters of Moses opening.” There remains today a monument to the crossing that King Solomon had erected at the site 400 years after the event (Isaiah 19:19).

The waters of the Red Sea are 3,000 to 5,000 feet deep to the north and the south of the crossing the Red Sea site. There happens to be a natural underwater land-bridge spanning the site of Moses' crossing of the Red Sea.

God's miracle included pulling and holding back the waters through incredible power. The Red Sea waters became "walls" held back by the strength of God (Exodus 14:22). Overnight, the ground was also dried, which is yet another nature miracle involved in the Hebrews' crossing the Red Sea. Normally, naturally, the seabed would have taken weeks or months to dry out when exposed to nature's elements.

Morning came, and massive Hebrew nation loaded up their things and began slogging through the Red Sea crossing. Every man, woman, child, and animal walked over the dry land, with enormous walls of water on both sides of them. They walked through, by faith (Hebrews 11:29), because that would have been a terrifying, risky journey. The water could have devoured them at any moment.

Finally, the Hebrews' crossing the Red Sea was accomplished. All of those in the camp made it safely across. There was still a great fear, though, because they could see and hear the Egyptian army's pursuit.

**Egyptians Crossing the Red Sea?**

The Egyptian army was in hot pursuit of their slaves. They wanted the Hebrews to return to Egypt to help rebuild their nation after the terrible 10 plagues devastated them. They grew hard-hearted against God, acting foolishly by following the Hebrews through the waters.

The Egyptians had already entered the Red Sea crossing area by the time the Hebrews made it safely onto the Arabian shore. They were really close to finally overtaking the Hebrews. They were ready to capture them and return to Egypt.

The moment came when every person, horse, and chariot in the army was fully embedded within
the walls of the Red Sea. The Lord struck just before the break of dawn (Exodus 14:24). He threw the Egyptians into utter confusion, leading to chaos in their camp. They were terrified!

The Lord wrecked havoc on the Egyptian army by twisting their chariot wheels. The horses could hardly pull the chariots. The soldiers finally figured out that they were fighting against God! (Exodus 14:25). They said, "Let's get out of here!"

Unfortunately, like too many people even today, the Egyptian army personnel discovered too late that they were opposing God. The Lord told Moses to wave his hand over the Red Sea again. As the morning sun rose, Moses waved his hand over the Red Sea. The walls of water broke loose in a terrifying display of natural force and divine power.

The soldiers who survived the crashing waves of the sea attempted to swim to shore, but they were unable to fight the hand of God. He didn't allow any survivors, actually sweeping the soldiers back into the sea. The Egyptian army was utterly decimated (Exodus 14:26-28).

Every individual soldier in the Egyptian army was killed (Psalm 106:11). Now, not only was the Egyptian homeland ravaged, but their military forces were totally wiped out. The Egyptians didn't recover for a long, long time after their disastrous attempt at crossing the Red Sea (Deuteronomy 11:4). Surely, the Pharaoh wept when hearing of the final defeat. The Hebrew nation was no longer under the power or threat of Egypt.

**Purposes for Crossing the Red Sea Miracle**

Imagine yourself watching the mighty waters of the Red Sea crashing over the Egyptian army. Can you see them struggling against God? Can you see them succumbing to the waves? Humans wilt and die by the forces of nature, not to mention the amazing power of God. Humans are nothing but little weak grasshoppers compared to our mighty God!

The Hebrew people were in awe of the moment (Exodus 14:31). Finally... as a nation... they were beginning to trust both God and his servant, Moses. The Hebrews were now a free nation!

The miracle of the Hebrew's crossing the Red Sea was a great work of God with several purposes. First of all, it was a miracle for God to reveal his love and protection for his chosen nation of Israel. God wanted them out of slavery and living as a free nation. That mission was perfectly accomplished. The Israelites sang their song of deliverance immediately after the Egyptians were destroyed (Exodus chapter 15).

Secondly, God was seeking the trust and belief in him, as the God of Glory (Exodus 14:17-18). The Lord wanted the individuals within the nation of Israel to understand he was their God, a God who can provide for them. A God who would be with them forever, if they trusted him by faith. The people did believe in God after watching this great Bible miracle, although there would be future struggles (Psalm 106:13-14).

Finally, God was judging the godless, faithless nation of Egypt. They had become arrogant, and treated the enslaved Hebrews harshly. God, as he does with all national corruption, judged them.
All of the Exodus miracles had the common theme of breaking the back of the arrogant Pharaoh and the nation of Egypt. That mission was also perfectly accomplished by God's powerful miracles.

The events of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt were recorded so that you and I could hear about them (1 Corinthians 10:11). They are amazing stories of God's work amongst those whom he loves. The Bible is for our benefit. The authors weren't writing these books of God's word in order to make a living - they wrote them for our benefit (Ephesians 2:7; 2 Peter 1:19-21), they are factual, so that we can learn how he works.

Grasp This!

Fruit of the Spirit Response to Crossing the Red Sea:

Well, God gave you his word, the Bible. Today's lesson was another example of the mighty works he accomplishes. Do YOU believe in miracles? Will you trust in the living God who saved his chosen people out of slavery?

The Bible tells us that we're all naturally enslaved to sin (John 8:34; Romans 6:20-21; Ephesians 2:1-3). God sent his Son, Jesus, to deliver us from our bondage to sin (John 3:16). Those of us who, like the Hebrews trusting God and Moses, trust the Lord to lead our exodus out of slavery, will live for him and with him forever (Romans 6:6-7). You cannot imagine what he has in store for you if you love him (1 Corinthians 2:9).

Jesus informs us that we're naturally slaves of sin, but we can be set free! (John 8:31-32). Spiritual freedom is not automatic. It doesn't happen without commitment and devotion to God through Jesus Christ. No amount of your efforts will get it done (John 1:12-13). Spiritual freedom happens when you repent and believe in Jesus Christ alone for eternal life (John 5:24).

How about you? Have you crossed the Red Sea and made it to the other side? Or, do you feel more like an Egyptian soldier, with the walls of judgment closing in on you? Well, if you're still breathing, and you probably are, then there is time for you. God is full of grace and mercy, wanting no one to perish (1 Timothy 2:3-4). God is calling you to trust him... do so today: Sinners Prayer.

Crossing the Red Sea Bible Study Questions:
1) Why did Pharaoh keep hardening his heart against God? (see Romans 9:17-18).
2) How does the Hebrews slavery show us our slavery to sin? Compare and contrast.
3) What happens to people who do not believe in miracles such as the Hebrew's crossing the Red Sea?

Crossing the Red Sea Bible Verses:

Jesus answered them, "Truly I tell you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. A slave does not live in the house forever. A son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:34-36 NHEB."
"If God were your father, you would love me, for I have come from God. For I have not come of myself, but he sent me. Why do you not understand my speech? Because you cannot hear my word." John 8:42-43 NHEB.

The Hebrews made a calf in Horeb, and worshiped a molten image. Thus they exchanged God's glory for an image of a bull that eats grass. They forgot God, their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt, wondrous works in the land of Ham, and awesome things by the Red Sea. Psalm 106:19-22 NHEB.

"We will not hide these truths from our children, telling the generation to come the glorious deeds of the LORD, his strength, and his wondrous works that he has done... So they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments" Psalm 78:4,7 NHEB.

**Miracle Prayer:**
Dear Heavenly Father, You perform such great miracles that leave us mere in humans in awe. We don't get to witness this crossing the Red Sea miracle, but we get to read it about. Thank you so much for giving us your Word to teach us, Lord. Thank you for this great work that you did for the people you love. Help us understand that our response of belief is required. God, help us cross over to the other side safely, forever in your loving arms. In Christ's name, Amen.

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