

Crossing the Red Sea

Trapped between the sea and Pharaoh's army, God parts the waters. Israel crosses on dry ground and the sea closes on the Egyptians.

Exodus 14:1-31

CHARACTERS: Moses, Pharaoh, The Israelites, God

THEMES: Deliverance, Faith in impossible situations, God fights for His people

GOD LED THE people by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. But instead of taking them straight to Canaan, God led them toward the Red Sea. He had a plan.

When Pharaoh heard that the Israelites were hemmed in by the desert and the sea, he changed his mind. 'What have we done, letting Israel go?' He took his army—six hundred of the best chariots, plus all the other chariots of Egypt—and pursued them.

As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up and saw the Egyptian army. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord. 'Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die?' they complained to Moses.

Moses answered, 'Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.'

Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water.'

The angel of God moved from the front to the rear of the Israelites, and the pillar of cloud also moved behind them, standing between them and the Egyptians. Throughout the night, the cloud brought darkness to one side and light to the other.

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on their right and their left.

The Egyptians pursued them into the sea. In the morning watch, the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud and threw the Egyptian army into confusion. He jammed their chariot wheels.

'Let's get away from the Israelites!' the Egyptians cried. 'The Lord is fighting for them!'

Then God told Moses to stretch out his hand over the sea. As morning appeared, the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing into it, and the Lord swept them into the sea. The water covered the chariots and horsemen—the entire army. Not one survived.

That day the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians. When the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord against Egypt, they feared the Lord and put their trust in Him and in Moses His servant.