

The Sea of Reeds

This document provides an enumeration of Biblical information, supplemented with information from other sources, to locate the Sea of Reeds, the place of passage, and the Mount Sinai.

Information

- God did not lead the people of Israel to the north, by way of the land of the Philistines, but He led the people around, to the east, by way of the wilderness of the Sea of Reeds (Ex.13:17, 18,20; 14:3).
- So, to the west of the Sea of Reeds is situated a wilderness, a wilderness of minimal 3 days' journey (Ex.3:18; 5:3).
- A day's journey, that is the distance who someone walks in circa 8 hours, corresponds, according to Herodotus (5,53; 5th century B.C.), with 150 stades (is $\pm 27\frac{1}{2}$ km; this corresponds with the half day's journey (± 14 km) from Bethlehem to Gibeah, Jdg.19:8-15).
<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/2456/pg2456.txt>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek_units_of_measurement#Length
- The 11 days' journey from Mount Horeb (= Sinai) by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea therefore correspond to about 300 km (Dt.1:2).
- Kadesh Barnea was located, like Mount Hor, on the border of the land of Edom (Nm.20:16, 23; 33:37).
- Kadesh Barnea was located in the Wilderness of Zin on the edge of the southern land (= Negeb; Gn.16:14; 20:1; 24:62; Js.15:1-4).
- The land of Edom is Mount Seir (Gn.32:3; 36:8,9,16; Dt.2:1,4,5).
- The people of Israel journeyed the first days after their departure from Rameses day and night (Ex.12:37; 13:21).
- By the way of the wilderness of the Sea of Reeds the people of Israel came in Etham, which was on the edge of the wilderness (Ex.13:20; Nm.33:6).
- Israel did not go further at Etham, but returned and camped between Migdol (means 'tower') and the sea, near Pi Hahiroth, which was at the sea (Ex.14:2; Nm.33:7; the names Migdol and Pi Hahiroth are of Egyptian origin, but Etham and Baal Zephon not).
- Baal Zephon was located across the sea (Ex.14:2,9; Nm.33:7; Baal Zephon {means 'lord of the north'}) was considered as a god of the north wind who lived in the mountains near the northern shore of the sea).
- In order to prevent unexpected attacks the Egyptians had built watchtowers (migdols) in strategic places (cf. 2Kg.9:17).
- The land of Midian was located in modern Saudi Arabia, on the east side of the Gulf of Aqaba (Gn.25:1-6, the country of the east is the Syrian-Arabian wilderness).
- After the passage through the Sea of Reeds the people of Israel were again in (the Wilderness of) Etham (Nm.33:8).
- In Hebrew is the sea where Israel passed through called *yām-sûp*, which means Sea of Reeds or Sea of Weeds (see Jn.2:5 where *sûp* is translated with weeds).
- In the Septuagint *yām-sûp* is represented by *Eruthrāi thalassēi* (Red sea), which the New Testament has taken over (Ac.7:36; Heb.11:29; in some parts of the Red Sea there are many reddish places which are caused by a weed that once was used to color all sorts of things red).
- Flavius Josephus mentions the sea where the people of Israel passed through not only the Red Sea, but also the Arabian Gulf (Antiq.III,1:5).
<http://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/josephus.html>
- In Ex.23:31 the boundary of the promised land is indicated: from the Sea of Reeds (= Gulf of Aqaba/eastern border) to the Sea of the Philistines (= Mediterranean Sea/western border), and from the wilderness (southern border) to the River (= Euphrates/northern border; cf. Gn.15:18 and 1Kg.4:21,24).

- The Sea of Reeds in 1Kg.9:26, with Ezion Geber on the shore near Elath, is as in Ex.23:31 the Gulf of Aqaba (Ezion Geber formed a part of the land of Edom in Solomon's time).
- The LORD caused the sea to go by a strong east wind all night, and made the sea dry, and the waters were divided (Ex.14:21).
- The people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left (Ex.14:22; 15:8).
- Mount Sinai is in Arabia (Gl.4:25).
- In April and May dewing only takes place along the banks of the Nile, the shore of the Red Sea, and in the Wilderness of Hisma, a plateau east of the land of Midian (Ex.16:13,14, in April and May there is no dewing between the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqaba).
http://www.konkyo.org%20_%20Solving%20the%20Mysteries%20of%20the%20Exodus (see map 1 for the wilderness of Hisma)
- One month after the spring equinox and after the beginning of the exodus a massive amount of quails descended in the Wilderness of Sin (Ex.16:1,12,13, and see at 1444/'43 B.C. in the document *The chronology of the Bible*).
- The descending of a massive amount of birds is a known phenomenon in the Wilderness of Hisma (Ex.16:12,13; the peak takes place about one month after the spring equinox).
- When Moses went to Egypt from the land of Midian, he came along the mountain of God (= Horeb; Ex.3:1; 4:18-27).
- The mountain of God (= Horeb) must be located in or near the land of Midian for when the Angel of the LORD appeared to Moses in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, he lived with his father in law in the land of Midian (Ex.2:15; 3:1-12; Ac.7:29-30).
- The father in law of Moses lived according to Flavius Josephus at the city Madian (is modern al-Bad'; Antiq.II,11:1).
- According to Flavius Josephus was Mount Sinai the highest of all the mountains in the surroundings (Antiq.II,12:1; III,5:1).

Conclusions

- On all places were *yām-sûp* (Sea of Reeds) is written in the Scriptures, it concerns the Gulf of Aqaba.
- In Moses' time was the area between the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqaba a buffer zone controlled by the Egyptians (Ex.14:3; Nm.34:5; the border of the buffer zone ran from the Mediterranean Sea along the Brook of Egypt till the top of the Gulf of Aqaba).
- In the land of Midian, which was located on the east side of the Gulf of Aqaba, was Moses out of reach of the Egyptians (Ex.2:15).
- To come as fast as possible out of reach of the Egyptians the people of Israel journeyed the first days after their departure from Rameses day and night (Ex.12:37; 13:21).
- The way of the wilderness of the Sea of Reeds ran through the wilderness to the top of the Gulf of Aqaba (formerly this was the trade route between Egypt and Arabia).
- The watchtower (migdol) stood on the edge of the buffer zone so that the Egyptians could observe an invasion over land from the east timely (Ex.14:2; Nm.33:7).
- The people of Israel journeyed just beyond the top of the Gulf of Aqaba and came into Etham, which was located at the end of the wilderness and outside the buffer zone of Egypt (Ex.13:20; Nm.33:6; the name Etham probably comes from El Yitm, a mountaintop at the top of the Gulf of Aqaba).
http://www.konkyo.org%20_%20Solving%20the%20Mysteries%20of%20the%20Exodus (map 2)
- Israel returned, came again in the buffer zone, and camped at Pi Hahiroth at the sea, which made Pharaoh think that Israel was bewildered (Ex.14:2,3).
- Pi Hahiroth was not far below the top of the Gulf of Aqaba because when Israel had passed through the sea they still journeyed 3 days (±85 km) in the Wilderness of Etham (= Sur; Ex.15:22; Nm.33:8).
- The Gulf of Aqaba is only at the top not too deep to make dry by a strong wind (av. depth is 800m; Ex.14:21).
<http://www.bible.ca/archeology/maps-bible-archeology-exodus-route-nuweiba-british-admiralty-nautical-depth-chart-12.jpg>

- From the beginning of the night the LORD caused the sea to go by a strong east wind (Ex. 14:21; 15:8, a wind between north-east and south-east is called an east wind; the Gulf of Suez needs a north wind).
- About 6 hours later, when the tide receded, an underwater ridge near Eilat of about 4 km long had become dry (Ex. 14:21; 15:8).
- On both sides of the ridge the waters were gathered together (Ex. 15:8; Ps. 78:13).
<https://www.europhysicsnews.org/articles/epr/pdf/2005/03/epr05306.pdf> (fig.2)
- The people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left (Ex. 14:22, the word wall is used here metaphorical in the meaning of protection, for waters that normally threat life now protected them; in the same way it is used in 1Sm. 25:16, for a multitude of wandering about men normally came to plunder {v.15}).
- In circa 5 hours all Israel had crossed the ridge.
- In the morning watch, when the LORD had hardened the hearts of the Egyptians, Pharaoh and his army went over the ridge when the tide was coming in (Ex. 14:17,23,24).
- When the Egyptians noticed that their chariot wheels did not track they fled from the face of Israel (Ex. 14:24,25, not 'took off').
- When the morning appeared, and the wind began to shift to the west, because the area of low pressure which had caused the strong east wind was crossing the sea around the ridge, the sea returned to its normal state while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea (Ex. 14:27,28; 15:10; see also Ps. 77: 17-21).
http://www.konkyo.org%20_%20Solving%20the%20Mysteries%20of%20the%20Exodus (map 4)
- The Egyptians were carried away by the sea and Israel saw them dead upon the east shore (Ex. 14:30; 15:10).
- Mount Sinai is Jebel el Lawz (2578m), the highest mountain in the land of Midian, located about 250 km from Kadesh Barnea (which is by way of Mount Seir to Kadesh Barnea ±300 km, or 11 days' journey; Dt. 1:2).
http://www.konkyo.org%20_%20Solving%20the%20Mysteries%20of%20the%20Exodus (map 2)
- Mount Sinai is located on the northern edge of the wilderness of Mount Sinai, which is the back of the wilderness seen from the city of Madian (= al-Bad'; Ex. 3:1).
- The Wilderness of Sin is the Wilderness of Hisma (Ex. 16:1).
- The Wilderness of Etham is located on the east side of the upper part of the Gulf of Aqaba (Nm. 33:8).
- The city of Madian (= al-Bad') may have been the place where Moses fled, because a journey to Egypt from this place leads along the mountain of God (= Horeb; al-Bad' is located ±50 km south of Jebel el Lawz; Ex. 3:1; 4:18-27).
http://www.konkyo.org%20_%20Solving%20the%20Mysteries%20of%20the%20Exodus (map 1)
- The area between the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqaba is named Sinai because it was thought that there is located Mount Sinai.
- As result of this the idea arose that formerly a part of that area was also called Arabia (Gl. 4: 25).