



the crossings

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"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:13

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W.D. Furiioso, Writer ~ Frances Furiioso, Editor

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The Crossings

The Red Sea Crossing

*Exodus 14:19-31*¹

¹⁹ And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved, and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. ²⁰ So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus, it was a cloud and darkness *to the one*, and it gave light by night *to the other*, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry *land*, and the waters were divided. ²² So the children 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. ²³ And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. ²⁴ Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. ²⁵ And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians." ²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen." ²⁷ And

¹ *New King James Version*

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So, the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸ Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, *and* all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained. ²⁹ But the children of Israel had walked on dry *land* in the midst of the sea, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ³⁰ So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so, the people feared the LORD AND believed the LORD and His servant Moses.

The Jordan River Crossing

Joshua 3:9-17²

9 So Joshua said to the children of Israel, “Come here, and hear the words of the LORD your God.” ¹⁰ And Joshua said, “By this you shall know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: ¹¹ Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan. ¹² Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe. ¹³ And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the

² *New King James Version*

waters of the Jordan, *that* the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap. ¹⁴ So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, ¹⁵ and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), ¹⁶ that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that is beside Zaretan. So, the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. ¹⁷ Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

Joshua 4:10-24

¹⁰ So the priests who bore the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD had commanded Joshua to speak to the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua; and the people hurried and crossed over. ¹¹ Then it came to pass, when all the people had completely crossed over, that the ark of the LORD and the priests crossed over in the presence of the people. ¹² And the men of Reuben, the men of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses had spoken to them. ¹³ About forty thousand prepared for war crossed over before the LORD for battle, to the plains of Jericho. ¹⁴ On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they had

feared Moses, all the days of his life. ¹⁵ Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, ¹⁶ “Command the priests who bear the Ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan.” ¹⁷ Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, “Come up from the Jordan.” ¹⁸ And it came to pass, when the priests who bore the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD had come from the midst of the Jordan, *and* the soles of the priests’ feet touched the dry land, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks as before. ¹⁹ Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. ²⁰ And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal. ²¹ Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: “When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, ‘What *are* these stones?’ ²² then you shall let your children know, saying, ‘Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land’; ²³ for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over,²⁴ that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it *is* mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.”



Interpreting the Crossings

Here we are considering these two crossings recorded in the Old Testament: The crossing over the Red Sea in Exodus 14 and the crossing over the Jordan River in Joshua 3 & 4. These crossings depict memorial experiences for the Israelites.³ The apostle Paul said that the things recorded in the Old Testament, like these two crossings, are “written for our instruction and encouragement”.⁴ The stories of these two crossings contain different details yet have a unity in their meaning.

We must interpret the Old Testament in light of the New Testament – particularly with regards to typology. And when we do this, there is a guiding principle which is found in Paul’s epistle to the Corinthians: “The spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual.”⁵ Simply applied, this means that what we see in the Old Testament types are “natural” things which are symbolic of New Testament spiritual realities of the mystery of Christ. As Paul says in another place: “Things which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.”⁶

³ Cf. “The Song of Moses” (Exodus 15); “The Memorial Stones” (Joshua 4)

⁴ Romans 15:4

⁵ 1 Corinthians 15:46

⁶ Colossians 2:17

The crossings typify “Salvation”. In the Old Testament, salvation was pictured as a deliverance from human enemies. In the New Testament, salvation is presented in terms of deliverance from spiritual evil. In the crossing of the Red Sea, we see SALVATION FROM something; and in the crossing of the Jordan River, we see SALVATION TO something. The crossing of the Red Sea pictures Israel’s DELIVERANCE FROM the oppression of Egypt, slavery, and Pharaoh, which represent the world, the flesh, and the Devil. In New Testament terms, the crossing of the Red Sea typifies being SAVED FROM sin. The crossing of the Jordan River pictures Israel ENTERING INTO the Promised Land where they would possess their inheritance by defeating human enemies.⁷ In New Testament terms, the crossing of the Jordan River typifies being SAVED TO walk and serve in “newness of life”⁸.

The Feast of Passover

There is something significant recorded in Joshua 4:19: “Now the people came up from the Jordan on **the tenth day of the first month....**” (Nissan is equivalent to March-April on our calendar.)

That date is significant because on the 10th day of Nissan the Feast of Passover⁹ was initiated with every Hebrew family

⁷ Joshua 3:10

⁸ Romans 6:4; 7:6

⁹ Exodus 12:1-14; Leviticus 23:4-5

choosing a lamb without blemish for sacrifice. On the evening of the 14th day, the Passover lamb was sacrificed, cooked, and eaten during the night. The blood was applied on the door posts and lintel. This feast celebrates the Exodus from Egypt. But, like all of the Hebrew feasts, it also has a prophetic meaning. It looked forward to the sacrifice of the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."¹⁰ This is what Paul was communicating with his words: "For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us."¹¹ Not only did Jesus fulfill this feast symbolically, but also quite literally. On the 10th of Nissan, what some call "Palm Sunday", Jesus rode down the Mount of Olives on a colt and was crucified four days later.

It is also significant to note that what we see in the next chapter of the Book of Joshua is the first time the Feast of Passover was celebrated in the promised land; and the way was prepared for the Feasts of Unleavened Bread and First Fruits because on the day after Passover, unleavened bread was eaten, and the manna ceased, and the people began planting and harvesting for the first time in their new land.¹²

¹⁰ John 1:29, 36

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 5:7

¹² Joshua 5:10-12

The stories of the two crossings are “hinged” to the Feast of Passover: The Feast of Passover is instituted just prior to the crossing of the Red Sea and celebrated for the first time in the Promised Land just after the crossing of the Jordan River. The fact that God instructed Moses and Joshua, and all Israel, to celebrate the Passover at these times, served to connect the meaning of the Passover with the experience of the crossings – and as we’ve said, it should serve to instruct us also in the same way.

On This Side of the Jordan

There is something else recorded in Joshua by which we can be instructed, and that has to do with the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half the tribe of Manasseh: We can learn from their mistakes. They are mentioned briefly in Joshua 5 and again in chapter 22, but their story begins in Numbers 32: God had declared that the tribes’ inheritance required crossing the Jordan River and dwelling in the Promised Land¹³; but these tribes insisted that their inheritance would be on this side of the Jordan¹⁴. They desired the land around Gilead because it was “a place for livestock” and good for their families.¹⁵ I think this is a good example of

¹³ Deuteronomy 11:31

¹⁴ Numbers 32:19

¹⁵ Numbers 32:1-5

“worrying about what we will eat, drink and wear tomorrow, and not seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness”.¹⁶ Moses pleaded with them, but in the end he gave into their plea bargain to help the rest of Israel fight the inhabitants of Canaan but they themselves would settle in Gilead on this side of the Jordan.¹⁷

In not submitting to God’s plan for inheritance, they set a bad spiritual example for their children, which influenced them to also be unfaithful to the Lord.¹⁸ I think these tribes are a good example of what is called “nominal Christianity” – Christian, not in reality, but in name only. In the Book of the Law, God had instituted an order of worship to be practiced in the Promised Land. But, because they wanted to be “associated” with the Hebrew religion, these tribes invented an imitation order of worship by building an imitation altar just over the border of Canaan close to where they lived in Gilead, which they presumably visited from time to time. They said that the altar would not be for authentic sacrifices but for a “witness”.¹⁹ The name “Gilead” means “witness heap”. But, trying to associate oneself with the faithful while being unfaithful, will result in a false witness. These tribes actually set up their

¹⁶ Matthew 6:31-34

¹⁷ Numbers 32:6-42

¹⁸ Cf. 2 Kings 10:32-33

¹⁹ Joshua 22. The name Gilead means “witness heap”, the pile of stones heaped up between Jacob and Laban to certify their covenant; located on Mt Gilead.

children for judgment and destruction. In the days of King Jehu, God had Hazael conquer these tribes and take over the land of Gilead.²⁰

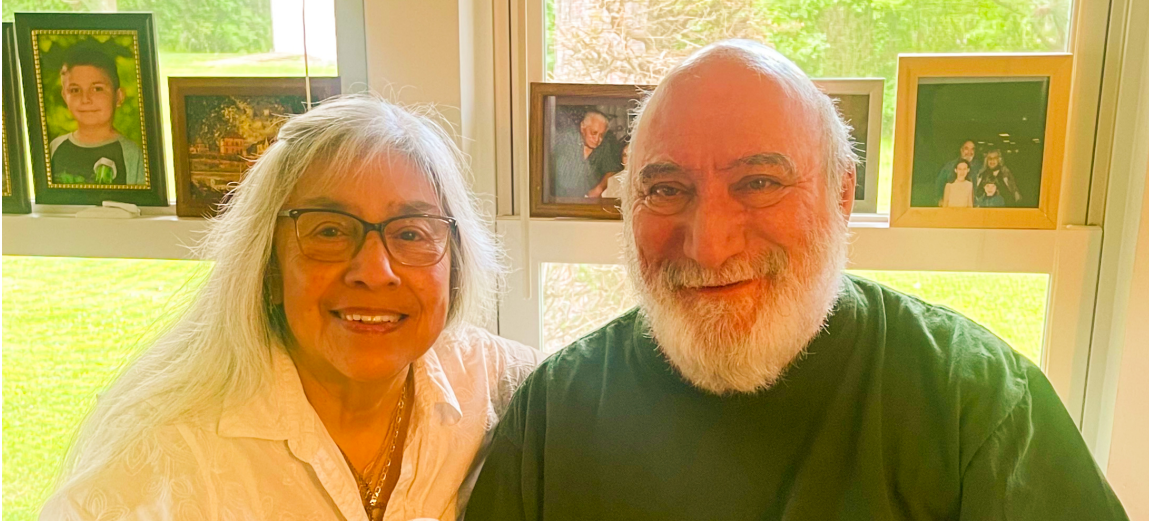


The Crossings is an excerpt from the eBook [The Meaning of Baptism](#), which is freely available to download on our [website](#).



²⁰ 2 Kings 10:32-33

Bill & Frances Furioso
~ At Christ's Table ~



Bill Furioso and his wife, Frances, have been married for more than 40 years, and have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Bill and Frances served as missionaries in South Africa for thirteen years making disciples, establishing churches, and training church leaders. Over a span of 40 years, they also traveled extensively in an itinerant Bible teaching ministry which took them to hundreds of gatherings on four continents ministering in churches, conferences, spiritual formation seminars, and home gatherings. They have shepherded several churches, disciplined many to Christ, and mentored church leaders in the USA and abroad.

Being an avid student by nature, Bill has done both formal and informal study in various fields including Education, Music, Philosophy and Theology. As a writer, he has authored many publications which are distributed worldwide. Because of Bill's disabilities resulting from a spinal cord injury, he can no longer travel, so their ministries of writing, recording, distributing, mentoring, and correspondence are now shared primarily via the Internet... www.AtChristsTable.org

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