

The Baptism of Moses: Moses Responds to the Whiners, Restores Order & Shifts Influence Away from Pharaoh to Himself, Ex 14:13–14; Pillar of Cloud and Fire Protects the Israelites; Crossing Litter Bitter Lake, Ex 14:19–23; Israelites Baptized into Moses, Moses Baptized into the Pillar of Cloud and Fire

Exodus 14:13 -But Moses said to the people, “Do not fear! Do not fear! Stand fast and watch the deliverance of the Lord which He will produce for you here today. The Egyptians, whom you have seen today, you shall never see again.

v. 14 - “The Lord Himself will fight for you, but you must keep quiet.”

1. This speech was designed to restore order in the souls of the Israelites from which we observe three principles:
 - (1) “Do not fear!” Principle: Order in the soul must precede order in the commonwealth. If the people are afraid then they are cowards and ripe for slavery.
 - (2) “Stand fast!” Principle: Order among the troops must precede an orderly advance. Ergo: “We must indeed all hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.”¹
 - (3) “Watch!” Principle: Orientation to the solution must precede adjustment to the new objective.
2. Moses has given the Israelites rationales for courage under the faith-rest drill: (1) “You will never see Pharaoh’s army again,” and “the Lord will fight for you today.”
3. The people are galvanized together by Moses’ speech. Previously they were influenced by Pharaoh but now they are influenced by Moses.
4. This is the baptism of the Israelites into Moses. They believed what he said and then the Lord’s demonstration of His power enabled them to walk into the lake bed with walls of water hovering on both sides.
5. This miracle is performed by Jesus Christ, the God of Israel, Who is made visible by the cloud and the fire.

Exodus 14:19 -And the angel of the Lord, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them.

v. 20 - So it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was a cloud along with the darkness, yet it gave light at night. Thus the one did not come near the other all night.

6. This pillar must have been enormous. There are two million Jews plus animals, wagons, and Egyptian refugees. It is not known how many men Pharaoh deployed but his army was supplied with armor, horses, and chariots.
7. Moses was baptized into the pillar of cloud and fire; he was influenced by the Lord’s promise to which he placed his faith and confidence. Therefore, when he stretched out his hand over the waters, the omnipotence of the Lord went into action.

¹ “Benjamin Franklin’s remark to John Hancock at the signing of the Declaration of Independence, 4 July 1776” (*The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 3d ed. [New York: Oxford University Press, 1979; repr., 1980], 218:14.

Exodus 14:21 - Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind which blew all night, turning the sea into dry land and the waters were divided.

v. 22 - The Israelites went through the midst of the sea on dry land and the waters were a wall on their right and on their left.

v. 23 - Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit and all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea.

8. It took between six and eight hours for two million Israelites and their animals to move from one side of the lake to the other; an operation that required at least a one mile gap between the waters.
9. As the company moved across, the lake's bed was dry; their animals did not become bogged down in mud and silt. They moved forward between walls of water because they had faith in Moses and as a result they identified themselves with him because they were influenced by him.
10. Moses was leading the people; his faith was placed in the Shekinah Glory and as a result Moses identified himself with the Lord of the Armies.
11. Therefore, this was a real baptism. No water was involved, although there was plenty of it, but not a drop touched Moses or any Israelite. The only ones who got wet were the soldiers and the horses of the Egyptian army.