

Exodus 13:17-22 **Departure from Egypt – carrying the Bones of Joseph**

17 Then it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, "Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt." 18 So God led the people around by way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt. 19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you." 20 So they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. 21 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. 22 He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

- ✧ The closest rout from Egypt to the land of Canaan, would be to go directly to the land of the Philistines who were living in the area of Gaza, which was the rout Israel had followed originally when going to Joseph in Egypt, and the rout Abraham had followed when famine was in the land of Canaan.
- ✧ God knew the people well, that their tendency when faced with the prospect of war would be to seek to return to Egypt, preferring the familiarity of slavery to the unknown act of trusting God when the odds of war seemed to be against them.
 - ◇ That seems to be human nature even today, to trust in the ability and skills of men instead of believing and trusting God by carefully following His revealed ways and laws, which would lead to continued blessings from God and prosperity for our nation.
- ✧ God led them to the Wilderness of the Red Sea, instead of following the usual trade route.
- ✧ Also, if God had taken them to the land of the Philistines and they had entered the promised land they would not have come to Mount Horeb (Mount Sinai) in the land of Midian which is the place God had told Moses that Moses would serve God on "this mountain." [Exodus 3:12]
- ✧ Also God had yet another demonstration of His power in the Red Sea for Israel to witness, and as a testimony to the world that there is no power greater than the God of Israel.
- ✧ They took with them the bones of Joseph as Joseph had commanded nearly 400 years before because he believed the words of God to Abraham. [Genesis 50:25, Genesis 15:13-14]
- ✧ God led the way by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. [Exodus 13:21-22, 40:34-38, Numbers 9:15-23, 1 Corinthians 10:1-4]