

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
September 11, 1931

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed September 4, 1931

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology

REVISING EXODUS

Science and archaeology have rationalized Noah's Flood - actual deposits of which have been found at Ur of the Chaldees - and now Major C. S. Jarvis, governor of Sinai, offers us in Blackwood's Magazine a non-miraculous version of the passage of the Israelites "through the midst of the sea," which subsequently overwhelmed their pursuers. It was not, he says, the Red Sea that was crossed, but Lake Bardawil, at the extreme north of the Sinai peninsula, between Port Said and El Arish. This lake is a huge clay pan, some feet below sea level and separated by a causeway of sand from the Mediterranean. In rough weather the sandbank is breached at many points and the pan is flooded, but unless (as at present) the breaches are artificially maintained they soon silt up and the lake becomes dry land. It was in this condition, we are told, when Moses led his people along the sandbank.

A cyclonic depression was advancing along the coast from Egypt. Coming from the eastward, as it does to this day in Sinai when heavy weather is about, was a great towering cumulo-nimbus cloud "black in the center, with hard white edges. This column, which begins at the skyline and is most impressive, extends to the zenith, constantly emitting lightning, and at night is an intermittent blaze of fire" - a veritable "pillar of fire and cloud," as described in Exodus.

Major Jarvis thinks the Egyptian commander, seeing the Israelites straggling along the causeway, decided to send his chariots across the dry lake bed to cut them off, but before this could be accomplished the rising seas broke through, the clay pan was flooded, and the waters "covered the chariots and the horsemen and all the host of Pharaoh."

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

SCIENCE SERVICE
21st and Constitution Ave.
Washington, D.C.