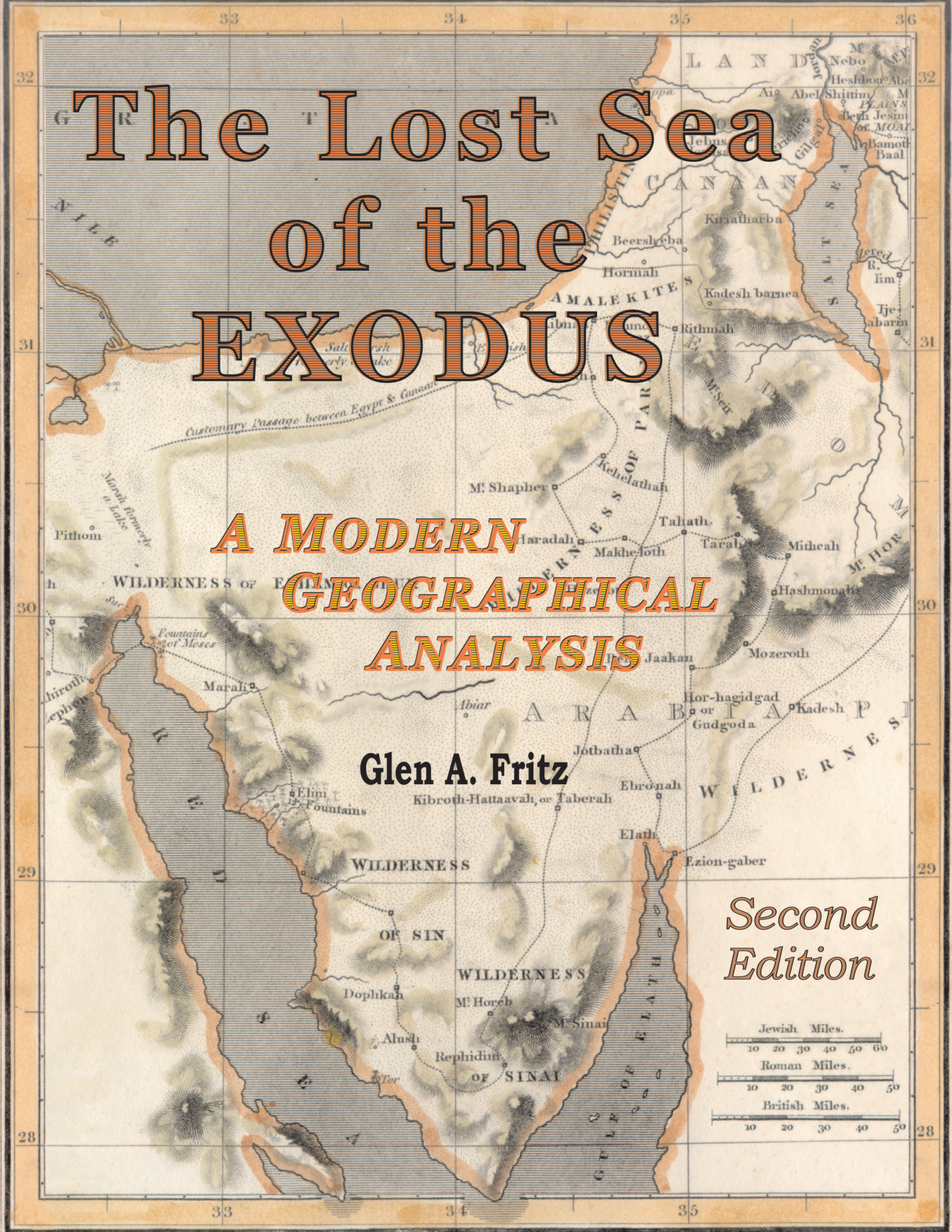
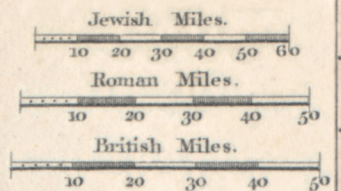


The Lost Sea of the EXODUS

A MODERN GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

Glen A. Fritz

*Second
Edition*





1446 BC - AD 2016

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The ancient Exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt has been a topic of mystique and curiosity for millennia. Its principal enigmas are the whereabouts of Mount Sinai and the parting of the sea. This sea, called Yam Suph by Moses, appeared as a landmark throughout the Exodus, but its location has never been clearly identified. Ascertaining the position of this "Lost Sea" would provide vital clues about the location of Mount Sinai and the path of the Exodus. The identity of this sea, and the reasons it became "lost," are painstakingly disclosed in this work.

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**THE LOST SEA OF THE EXODUS:
A MODERN GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS**

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Glen A. Fritz

This work is the second edition of *The Lost Sea of the Exodus*, first published in 2007 under ISBN: 1-59872-745-1. It was derived from the doctoral dissertation of the same title presented to the Texas State University-San Marcos in 2006, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Environmental Geography.

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Summary: An extensive geographical investigation of the biblical Exodus that focuses on the identity of the sea that was crossed by the Israelites. The analysis shows that the traditional Red Sea or Reed Sea terms clash with the meaning and geography of *Yam Suph*, the Hebrew Bible name for the sea. This work presents the true location of *Yam Suph* and the specifics of the Exodus route needed to reach it.

Cover: Adapted from “A Map of the Journeys of the Children of Israel from Egypt through the Wilderness to Canaan. As described in Numbers XXXIII,” drawn and engraved by H. Cooper, ca 1808.

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
PREFACE	xii
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	xiii
OVERVIEW	xv
CHAPTER	
1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 The Centrality of the Sea	
1.2 <i>Yam Suph</i> Theory Evolution	
1.3 Theory Problems	
2: OPENING THE INVESTIGATION	7
2.1 Identifying <i>Yam Suph</i>	
2.2 Explaining the <i>Yam Suph</i> Confusion	
2.3 Countering the “Reed Sea” Theories	
2.4 Uniting the Hypotheses	
2.5 Lines of Investigation	
2.6 Data Sources	
2.7 Summary	
3: INVESTIGATION PERSPECTIVES	13
3.1 Frameworks: Place, Time, and Philosophy	
3.2 The Biblical Sources	
3.3 The Date of the Exodus	
3.4 Extra-Biblical Data	
3.5 Philosophical Frameworks	
3.6 Summary and Conclusion	
4: THE REGION OF <i>YAM SUPH</i>	31
4.1 Scale and Scope	
4.2 Ancient Egypt Defined	
4.3 The Red Sea	
4.4 The Red Sea Gulfs	
4.5 The Gulf of Suez in History	
4.6 The Gulf of Aqaba in History	
4.7 The Isthmus of Suez	
4.8 Wadi Tumilat	
4.9 Regional Geography Conclusions	

5: THE <i>YAM SUPH</i> JOURNEYS	53
5.1 The Starting Point of the Exodus	
5.2 The Tel el-Dab'a Story	
5.3 The Journey to the Sea	
5.4 The Biblical Sea Crossing	
5.5 The Travel Pace to the Sea	
5.6 Beyond the Sea Crossing	
5.7 Summary and Conclusions	
6: <i>YAM SUPH</i> THEORIES	67
6.1 Synopsis of the Theories	
6.2 The Red Sea Tradition	
6.3 The "Inland Sea" Theory	
6.4 The "Reed Sea" Theories	
6.5 The Gulf of Aqaba Venue	
6.6 Summary and Conclusion	
7: THE HEBREW <i>YAM SUPH</i>	84
7.1 <i>Yam Suph</i> Basics	
7.2 History and Context	
7.3 Hebrew Geographical Perceptions	
7.4 A Promised Land Boundary	
7.5 <i>Yam Suph</i> and <i>Edom</i>	
7.6 The Historical <i>Yam Suph</i> Texts	
7.7 The Physical Character of <i>Yam Suph</i>	
7.8 The Meaning of <i>Yam Suph</i>	
7.9 Alternative <i>Yam Suph</i> Interpretations	
7.10 Conclusions about the Hebrew <i>Yam Suph</i>	
8: THE RED SEA MISNOMER	106
8.1 Introduction	
8.2 The Red Sea in Classical Geography	
8.3 The Gulf of Aqaba in Classical Geography	
8.4 Septuagint Ignorance of the Gulf of Aqaba	
8.5 Perpetuation of the Red Sea Tradition	
8.6 Conclusions about the Red Sea Misnomer	
9: THE "INLAND SEA" PROBLEMS	123
9.1 Introduction	
9.2 Contrary Historical Observations	
9.3 Ancient Canal Building	
9.4 Global Eustasy	
9.5 Archaeology and High Sea Levels	
9.6 Geology and the "Inland Sea"	
9.7 Gulf of Suez Tides	
9.8 "Inland Sea" Conclusions	
10: THE "REED SEA" PROBLEMS	135
10.1 Introduction	
10.2 Ecology Contradiction	
10.3 Analysis of the "Reed Sea" Problems	

10.4	Overview of the Isthmus Conditions	
10.5	Geology of the Northeast Nile Delta	
10.6	Northern Isthmus Lake Inventory	
10.7	Nile Delta Geological Implications	
10.8	Southern Isthmus Hydrology History	
10.9	Southern Isthmus Lake Inventory	
10.10	Southern Isthmus “Reed Sea” Problems	
10.11	Southern Isthmus Ecology	
10.12	Summary and Conclusion	
11:	THE REED SEA MYTH: LINGUISTICS AND <i>YAM SUPH</i>	163
11.1	Introduction	
11.2	Botanical Meanings Supposed for <i>Suph</i>	
11.3	Alternatives to Botanical Meanings	
11.4	Early <i>Yam Suph</i> Treatment (Pre-1875)	
11.5	Late <i>Yam Suph</i> Treatment (Post-1875)	
11.6	Methodologies of the “Reed Sea” Theorists	
11.7	A Current Egyptology Approach	
11.8	Summary and Conclusion	
12:	<i>YAM SUPH</i> CONCLUSIONS	181
12.1	The Problem	
12.2	History of the Problem	
12.3	The Approach to the Problem	
12.4	Corroborating the Hypotheses	
12.5	Conclusion	
13:	THE SEA CROSSING GEOGRAPHY	186
13.1	Introduction	
13.2	The Gulf of Aqaba Structure	
13.3	Gulf of Aqaba Crossing Theories	
13.4	Slope Data Discussion	
13.5	Other Crossing Considerations	
13.6	Implications for Further Study	
13.7	Conclusions	
14:	FROM EGYPT TO THE SEA	204
14.1	Introduction	
14.2	Sinai Peninsula Geography	
14.3	Exodus Route Overview	
14.4	Rameses to Succoth	
14.5	Succoth to Etham	
14.6	Etham to the Sea	
15:	THE ENCAMPMENT AT THE SEA	235
15.1	Migdol	
15.2	Baal-Zephon	
15.3	Pihahiroth	
15.4	The Scenario at the Sea	
15.5	EPILOGUE	

APPENDIX 1: THE <i>YAM SUPH</i> VERSES	254
APPENDIX 2: SELECTED ANCIENT-MODERN LATITUDES	256
APPENDIX 3: THE EXODUS TRAVEL PACE	259
A3.1 A Day’s Journey in Antiquity	
A3.2 A Day’s Journey in Historical Times	
A3.3 Revisiting the Seven-Day Tradition	
A3.4 The Wandering Misnomer	
A3.5 Climate Conditions and Travel	
A3.6 Conclusions about the Exodus Travel	
APPENDIX 4: THE EGYPTIAN CHRONOLOGY	263
A4.1 The Basis of Egyptian Chronology	
A4.2 The Chief Problem	
A4.3 Critiquing the “Fixed” Dating Points	
A4.4 Suggesting Changes	
A4.5 Conclusions	
APPENDIX 5: THE LOCUST PLAGUE AND <i>YAM SUPH</i>	268
A5.1 Locust Plague Arguments	
A5.2 Locust Plague Misconceptions	
A5.3 Translation Error in Exod. 10:19	
A5.4 The True Circumstances	
APPENDIX 6: GULF OF AQABA BATHYMETRY	272
A6.1 Overview of Gulf Surveys	
A6.2 Making the Map	
A6.3 The Slope Calculation Process	
A6.4 New Data on the Horizon	
APPENDIX 7: THE WILDERNEES OF SHUR	276
A7.1 Introduction	
A7.2 Traditional Interpretations of <i>Shur</i>	
A7.3 The Biblical Presentation of <i>Shur</i>	
A7.4 The Physical Geography of <i>Shur</i>	
A7.5 <i>Havilah</i>	
A7.6 Other Confirmations of <i>Shur</i>	
A7.7 Summary and Conclusion	
APPENDIX 8: WIND AND THE EXODUS SEA CROSSING	290
A8.1 Introduction	
A8.2 Evaluating the Wind Question	
A8.3 Challenging the Wind Theory	
A8.4 Wind Alternatives	
A8.5 Conclusion	
REFERENCES	294
INDEX	318

LIST OF TABLES

1.1 Categories of <i>Yam Suph</i> Hypotheses	5
7.1 Texts Placing <i>Yam Suph</i> at the Gulf of Aqaba	86
7.2 <i>Yam</i> Usage in the KJV	98
7.3 Biblical Descriptors of <i>Yam Suph</i>	99
7.4 Summary of the <i>Suph</i> Word Family	98
8.1 Classical Geography Sources Consulted	109
8.2 Three Exceptional <i>Yam Suph</i> Verses in the Septuagint	114
9.1 Tidal Data at the Heads of the Gulfs of Suez and Aqaba	136
11.1 The Biblical <i>Suph</i> Word Family	164
11.2 Historical Progression of the <i>Suph</i> Meanings	165
11.3 Greek Botanical Words	166
11.4 Summary of the Historical Treatment of <i>Yam Suph</i> by Key Bible Versions	170
13.1 The <i>Nuweiba</i> Transect Data Points	197
14.1 Waypoint Data for the Theorized Route	223
A1.1 The 24 <i>Yam Suph</i> Verses (KJV)	254
A2.1 Ancient and Modern Latitudes in the Exodus Region	256
A8.1 Hebrew Verbs Applied to the Exodus Sea Parting	293

LIST OF FIGURES

0.1 Carte du Voiage des Israelites.....	xiv
0.2 The Israelites Crossing the “Red Sea”.....	xv
0.3 The Region of the Exodus	xvi
0.4 The Red Sea ca 1650	xviii
0.5 A Traditional Exodus Route Map	xxiv
1.1 The Region of <i>Yam Suph</i>	2
1.2 An Exodus Map ca 1730	3
1.3 Eastern Egypt and the Isthmus of Suez	4
1.4 Two “Reed Sea” Exodus Theories	5
2.0 The Sands of Egypt near Giza	6
2.1 The Red Sea ca 1570	9
3.1 The Book of Exodus in the Dead Sea Scrolls	15
3.2 Transmission of the Hebrew Text	15
3.3 Moses at Mount Sinai	17
3.4 Rameses’ II Mummy	19
3.5 Timeline of Jewish History	21
3.6 The Israelites Eat the Passover	23
3.7 The Merneptah Stele	25
4.1 The Exodus Region	31
4.2 The Exodus Region Viewed from Space	32
4.3 Eastern Egypt and the Isthmus of Suez	33
4.4 The Exodus Region Compared to Texas	34
4.5 Egypt ca 1500 BC	35
4.6 The Near East at Night	36
4.7 The World as Described by Herodotus	37
4.8 The Red Sea ca 1626	39
4.9 Niebuhr’s 1762-3 Red Sea Chart	40
4.10 A Comparison of the Gulfs of Suez and Aqaba	41
4.11 Suez, Egypt ca 1839	42
4.12 A Transport Route between the Red Sea and Nile	43
4.13 The Missing Gulf of Aqaba ca 1770	45
4.14 The Gulf of Aqaba ca 1833	47
4.15 The Isthmus of Suez and Canal ca 1900	48
4.16 Isthmus of Suez Elevation Chart	49
4.17 The <i>Wadi Tumilat</i> Viewed from Space	50
4.18 The <i>Wadi Tumilat</i>	51
5.1 Ancient Places in the Modern Delta.....	54
5.2 “On the Nile”.....	55
5.3 Tel el-Dab’a and Avaris	56
5.4 Out of Egypt	57
5.5 The 1576 Geneva Bible, Exod. 14:21-22	58
5.6 Pharaoh and his Host Drowned in the Red-Sea	60
5.7 Distances from Goshen	61

5.8 A Partial Scheme of the Exodus	63
5.9 A Section of Wady Arabah	64
5.8 The Aravah Valley and the Mountains of Edom	66
6.1 A Diagram of the Postulated <i>Yam Suph</i> Locations	68
6.2 Antiquated Red Sea Geography	69
6.3 The Exodus ca 1711	70
6.4 Red Sea Crossing Theories	71
6.5 An “Inland Sea” Theory	72
6.6 The Exodus Route of Naville and Linant	73
6.7 The Red Sea as the “Sea of Reeds”	77
6.8 Schleiden’s 1858 Exodus Theory	79
6.9 Brugsch’s 1880 Exodus Theory	80
6.10 A Popular Southern Isthmus Route	81
7.1 The Relationship between <i>Edom</i> and <i>Yam Suph</i>	85
7.2 The Land Promise to Abram	88
7.3 Comparison of the Bounds Given to Abraham and Moses	90
7.4 Confused Boundaries	91
7.5 The Turkish-Egyptian Border ca 1893	92
7.6 The Landmarks of 1 Kings 9:26	94
7.7 <i>Ezion-Geber</i> Candidates	95
7.8 The Surmised <i>Ezion-Geber</i> Location ca 1847	96
7.9 <i>Ezion-Geber</i> ca 1828.....	96
8.1 The Red Sea According to Agnese Battista ca 1544	108
8.2 <i>Ash Sharma</i> Bay and the Gulf of Aqaba	111
8.3. The Deficient Aelanite Gulf	112
8.4 The Red Sea Ancient and Modern	113
8.5 A Holy Land Map, ca 16 th Century	116
8.6 The Red Sea ca 11 th Century AD	119
8.7 The Missing Gulf of Aqaba in the 1700s	120
8.8 Map Identifying both Gulfs as <i>Yam Suph</i>	122
9.1 The Inland Sea ca Early 1800s	123
9.2 The Inland Sea ca 1500-1000 BC	124
9.3 A Presumed <i>Heroopolis</i> Location	125
9.4 Naville’s “Inland Sea” Exodus Route	126
9.5 The Canal History	127
9.6 Ancient Canal Remnants in the Isthmus	128
9.7 Darius’ Canal	129
9.8 Sinai Peninsula Geology Map	131
9.9 Historical Sea Levels at Dor, Israel	132
9.10 Cross Section of the Southern Isthmus of Suez	133
9.11 Tide Map at the Head of the Gulf of Suez	135
10.1 Infrared Satellite Image of the Isthmus of Suez	139
10.2 The Isthmus <i>Pelusium Line</i> Demarcation.....	140
10.3 Infrared Satellite Image of the <i>Bitter Lakes</i>	141
10.4 A Ship in the Desert	142
10.5 Subsidence Rates in the Northeast Nile Delta	143
10.6 Eastern Egypt ca 1801	144
10.7 Ancient and Modern Nile Delta Shorelines	145
10.8 A Reconstruction of the Delta	146
10.9 <i>Lake Menzaleh</i> in the 19 th Century	147
10.10 The Nile Delta and Isthmus of Suez	148

10.11 <i>Lake Ballah</i> Prior to the Suez Canal	150
10.12 The Water Supply of <i>Lake Ballah</i>	151
10.13 Submerged Features of the Northeast Nile Delta	152
10.14 The Isthmus of Suez ca 1822	154
10.15 The Isthmus of Suez ca 1838	155
10.16 “ <i>Lake</i> ” <i>Timsah</i> Prior to the Suez Canal	157
10.17 The Yearly Oscillations of the Nile	158
10.18 Egyptian Painting of Papyrus in the Nile	160
10.19 Examples of Common Halophytes	161
11.1 The Finding of Moses at the River Bank	167
11.2 The Finding of Moses in a Royal Bathing Pool	168
11.3 The Mediterranean Coast and Nile Delta	176
11.4 The Historical Progression of the Exodus Sea	179
12.1 Ancient Midian and Mount Sinai	185
13.1 Theorized Gulf of Aqaba Crossing Sites	187
13.2 The Gulf of Aqaba Structure	188
13.3 The Western Pass at Aqaba	190
13.4 The Straits of Tiran Route	191
13.5 Straits of Tiran Depth Profiles	192
13.6 The <i>Nuweiba</i> Delta and Inland Routes	193
13.7 The Arabian Shore viewed from <i>Nuweiba</i>	194
13.8 The Hypothesized Crossing Path at <i>Nuweiba</i>	195
13.9 Depth Profile at <i>Nuweiba</i>	196
13.10 The Arabian Beachhead	198
13.11 Traditional Depictions of the Passage through the Sea	199
13.12 A Hypothetical Illustration of the Divided Sea	200
13.13 Egyptian Weaponry	201
13.14 Egyptian Chariots	202
14.1 Antique Photo in the Nile Delta	205
14.2 A Renaissance Version of Ptolemy’s <i>Asia IV</i> Map	206
14.3 Sinai Peninsula Physical Geography	210
14.4 Ancient Sinai Peninsula Roads.....	213
14.5 The Sinai Peninsula Section of the Peutinger Table.....	214
14.6 Sinai Peninsula Routes ca 1822.....	215
14.7 Proposed Exodus Route.....	218
14.8 The Coastal Plateau and <i>Ras en-Naqb</i>	221
14.9 Archaeology Findings in the Eastern Peninsula.....	222
14.10 Signs of an Oasis at <i>El-Tasah</i>	224
14.11 Route from <i>Khatmia Pass</i> to <i>Bir el-Themada</i>	225
14.12 Exodus Route between <i>Bir el-Themada</i> and <i>Wadi Aqaba</i>	226
14.13 The Route between <i>Wadi Aqaba</i> and <i>Wadi Watir</i>	227
14.14 Elevation Profile between <i>Tell el-Dab’a</i> and the <i>Etham</i> Encampment.....	228
14.15 The Track from “ <i>Etham</i> ” to <i>Nuweiba</i>	229
14.16 Elevation Profile between “ <i>Etham</i> ” and <i>Nuweiba</i>	229
14.17 Aerial View of the Proposed <i>Etham</i> Encampment	230
14.18 The Rugged <i>Wadi Watir</i> Terrain	231
14.19 The Narrow <i>Wadi Watir</i> Termination at <i>Nuweiba</i>	232
14.20 The Topography in <i>Wadi Watir</i>	233
14.21 <i>Ain el-Furtaga</i> in <i>Wadi Watir</i> ca 2000.....	234
15.1 The Southern Massif	236
15.2 The Locations of <i>Ugarit</i> and <i>Jebel Aqraa</i>	238

15.3 <i>Mount Casius</i> on an Early Map	240
15.4 <i>Mount Casius</i> Viewed from the Mediterranean	241
15.5 <i>Baal-Zephon</i> as Depicted on a Cylinder Seal.....	242
15.6 <i>Baal-Zephon</i> and the Exodus Region	243
15.7 The “Entrance” to <i>Wadi Watir</i>	245
15.8 Details of the Proposed <i>Pihahiroth</i> Site	246
15.9 The Coastal Terrain South of <i>Nuweiba</i>	250
15.10 An Aerial View of the <i>Nuweiba</i> Beachhead from the East	251
15.11 The Land Beyond the Sea of the Exodus	253
A2.1 A Classical Description of the Nile Delta	257
A3.1 Near East Camel Travel	260
A3.2 The Hajj to Mecca	261
A4.1 The “Orthodox” Chronology	264
A4.2 The Effect of Chronology Revision	266
A5.1 Egypt in the Mid-2 nd Millennium BC	269
A5.2 The Geography of the Locust Plague	271
A6.1 An Example of the Ship Track Data.....	272
A6.2 Gulf of Aqaba Bathymetry	273
A6.3 Depth Profile Comparisons	274
A6.4 Multibeam Sonar Scan of the <i>Nuweiba</i> Area	275
A7.1 A Traditional Depiction of the Wilderness of <i>Shur</i>	277
A7.2 The Distorted Relationship between Canaan and <i>Shur</i>	279
A7.3 The Egyptian <i>Shur</i> and Distorted Geography.....	280
A7.4 A Map of the Gen. 25:18 Region	281
A7.5 <i>Mount Seir</i> , ca 1839.....	283
A7.6 Proposed <i>Havilah</i> Locations.....	285
A7.7 The <i>Negev</i> , <i>Gerar</i> , <i>Kadesh</i> , and <i>Shur</i>	286
A7.8 An Early Map Showing <i>Shur</i> at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba	288
A7.9 Overlap of the Wildernesses of <i>Shur</i> and <i>Etham</i>	289

PREFACE

Yam Suph, the Hebrew name for the sea that parted in the Exodus, has traditionally been called the “Red Sea” and placed at the Gulf of Suez near Egypt. More recently, many scholars have defined it as the “Reed Sea” and assigned it to various inland Egyptian estuaries. However, such locations do not harmonize with the biblical data that clearly identify *Yam Suph* as the modern Gulf of Aqaba.

The confusion began over 2,000 years ago with the Greek *Septuagint* Bible, which equated the Hebrew *Yam Suph* with the Greek concept of the Red Sea. The Greeks were unaware of the Gulf of Aqaba, which caused the Gulf of Suez to become the default site for *Yam Suph*. The geographical ignorance of the Gulf of Aqaba persisted until the 19th century, allowing the Red Sea tradition to dominate without challenge.

The various “Reed Sea” theories, which are now favored over the Red Sea tradition, mainly hinge on the linguistic theory that *suph* referred to vegetation. But, these supposed botanical meanings are readily discredited by basic linguistic analyses of the Hebrew vocabulary related to *suph*.

A Gulf of Aqaba location for *Yam Suph* invalidates all of the theories that have placed the Exodus sea crossing near Egypt. More importantly, it mandates that Mount Sinai must be sought in the region of ancient Midian in northwest Saudi Arabia, not within the Sinai Peninsula as previously thought.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The zigzag path leading to this project began in Appleton, WI, where I was born to a civil engineer and a high school teacher. As far back as I can remember, I have been inquisitive and adventuresome. I still recall the intrigue I felt at age four, listening to a shortwave BBC broadcast about the Dead Sea scroll discoveries. In grade school I lived in a Mississippi River town steeped in French and Indian history, and became enamored with archaeology.

My family later moved to Omaha, NE, where I attended high school and eventually earned a DDS degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. While in Nebraska, one memorable pastime was tracing parts of the Lewis and Clark expedition along the Missouri River.

I served as a captain in the U.S. Air Force prior to completing an Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

residency at the University of Oklahoma. Being drawn to the ocean and warm weather, I eventually moved to Vero Beach, FL, where I operated a private practice for fifteen years.

In the 1990s I relocated to San Antonio, TX. At that time, the craft brewing industry was becoming popular and the opportunity arose to study Old World brewing with an English Brewmaster. I subsequently built and operated a small, award-winning microbrewery.

In 1996, I visited Israel for the first time. The trip catalyzed my interest in the ancient history and geography of the Near East. Over the next several years, I traveled in Israel, Egypt, and Jordan as time permitted, and studied Hebrew, which has been important for analyzing biblical geography nuances.

I soon realized that the route of the Exodus was far from settled, and I was challenged by its enigmas. But exploration of the region was a daunting task, hampered by cost, physical and political barriers, and the lack of good topographical mapping. I knew that any geographical analysis would be greatly aided by the availability of digital terrain modeling and high resolution satellite imagery.

At that time, tools like Google Earth® were not available, or even on the immediate horizon. In my quest to gain digital cartography skills, I enrolled in graduate level geography studies at Texas State University-San Marcos. Although it was not my original intent, I earned a PhD in Environmental Geography in 2006. In the course of my research, I was also able to visit the ancient region of Midian in Saudi Arabia and explore the site popularly touted as Mount Sinai.

My hope is to convey the geographical insights I have gained about the Exodus in a thorough and thought-provoking manner in order to advance the understanding of this truly remarkable event.

Glen A. Fritz
San Antonio, Texas
January 2016

