

It's more than a decade since I began writing these articles and I wanted to offer something fresh and inspiring. Going over some of my past musings I decided to offer these Lessons from The Sea.

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LESSONS FROM THE SEA: SETTING SAIL

Nosing my vehicle up to the yellow line I stopped at the logging chain, stretched taut, that marked the end of the parking lane. The apron, a steel plate that meets the boarding ramp connecting it with the dock, was secured to the ferry with cables and padlocks.

Waves whacked the ship from side to side against the wooden pilings. We loaded and only the mandatory setting of hand-brakes prevented vehicles from bouncing like toys. Hand-held radios crackled. Crew members signalled each other. Metal screeched as the apron lifted. The ship groaned and shuddered as gears were slammed into reverse. Propellers churned the water to suds and lines were cast off. Backing out of the harbour, ship's horns sounded to warn smaller vessels of our presence. We were setting sail.

Our ship was passing through narrow straits. Sweeping between two land masses, these waters are subject to the whims of the tides and the wind. Twenty-foot waves can pulverize small boats in minutes and this was a place where tsunamis could race with deadly speed.

Snarling winds, invigorated by open seas, can toss ships like toys and dead-heads, logs just under the surface of the water, pose a constant danger to navigators. Foam hisses and spits at the sides of the vessel. Some days, sweaty grey fog blankets the earth but today the sun is shining. There will be more menacing times but today is to be enjoyed.

"Thus says the Lord who makes a way in the sea and a path through the mighty waters...behold I will do a new thing...."

Trust the Pilot, not life's seas!