

Be Still and Know: *Zi Hahiroth*

And they removed from Etham, and turned again unto Pi Hahiroth, which is before Baal zephon: and they pitched before Migdol, Numbers 33:7.

During the 1970's, the Christian House Church Movement took serious hold in China. This movement of grassroots believers was not accepted by the Communist government. In fact, they were hindered, hated, and even hunted by the Communist regime. One of the courageous leaders of the persecuted House Church believers was Brother Yun; a man so dedicated to serving Yahweh that throughout China he is lovingly called by his nickname, the "Heavenly man." This is also the name of the book which tells his remarkable story.

Because of his activity, in reaching many for Christ, the Chinese government placed Brother Yun on their list of "most wanted" criminals. Time and again they persecuted and imprisoned him. There were many painful trials and experiences in his walk with Yahweh. But, through each, Brother Yun's faith was undimmed. He was always completely aware that Yahweh only allowed these difficulties while there was some good to come from it, as it says in Romans 8:28.

Brother Yun's third imprisonment was a very dark time. The guards were determined that he would not escape from them. So they took him into a room and beat his legs until they turned completely black below the knee. They wanted to cripple him permanently, because he had escaped several times. Many times during the painful beatings, which sometimes included the use of an electric shock baton, the guards would shout at Brother Yun raging at him to recant his love for Yahshua. In one such incident the guards even shouted that they held the power of Yun's life in their hands. They cruelly taunted that if he

didn't agree to their terms and stop teaching about Yahshua they would keep Yun there in prison and torment him for the rest of his life.

To this abusive boast, Brother Yun quietly responded that he couldn't be kept in that prison one day beyond the length of time Yahweh wanted him to stay. This further enraged the guards. They beat him until Brother Yun's legs were completely destroyed and he was unable to walk. Still they beat him every day, even in his crippled state.

But Brother Yun did not sin by complaining to God. He did not waiver in his faith no matter how angry and violent his oppressors became. Of this time, Brother Yun says, "I had no Bible with me so I meditated on God's Word from memory and prayed in tears for the churches. I shouted out Bible verses at the top of my voice, clinging to God's promises such as Psalm 27:1-3. I sang loudly day and night."

Then, on the morning of May 5, 1997, God instructed Brother Yun to escape from the maximum security prison. Brother Yun miraculously walked out of the prison, in broad daylight passing several security guards and checkpoints. He didn't realize until later that his legs had been healed the instant he needed them. Yahweh demonstrated His great power over Yun's life in showing his tormentors that indeed a child of God could not be imprisoned one day past the length of time Yahweh allowed.

But, this kind of mature faith in Yahweh's power and goodness was not yet found in the hearts of the escaping Hebrew slaves. They were about to face the terrible wrath of a powerful enemy, but instead of keeping their eyes trustingly upon Yahweh, aware that nothing could touch them without His permission, the Israelites quaked and complained.

STRENGTHENING FAITH UNDER PRESSURE

Ancient Israel's first test of faith in the face of fearsome and murderous rage took place at their third campsite called *Pi Hahiroth*, which means "mouth" and "kindled wrath." By a command from Yahweh, they had turned away from the north easterly route, the route

that led directly to Canaan. There is much evidence that the multitude was headed for the Gulf of Aqaba, east of the Suez, led by the witness of the cloud and the sword of fire. The name, *Pi Hahiroth*, also means “to subside, to calm; to be quiet in the face of wrath.”³¹

Speak unto the Children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal zephon... For Pharaoh will say of the Children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in, Exodus 14:2-3.

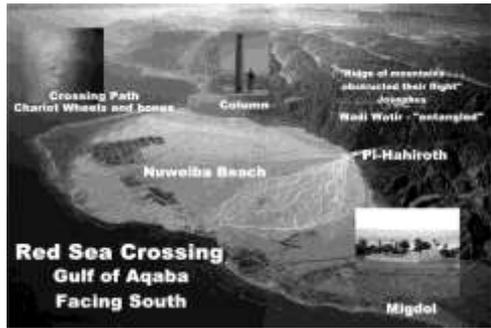
Pharaoh had hardened his heart against the God of Heaven (1 Samuel 6:16). He must have had much hatred built up in the aftermath of the plagues and the death of his own son. With the work force removed, recovery from the plagues would take a great deal of time. Egypt was in total chaos, the economy completely collapsed. Perhaps to wreak vengeance upon the former slaves, Pharaoh gathered his army, the greatest in the world before the plagues. He brought six hundred choice chariot drivers and all the chariots of Egypt. This would have been his entire arsenal, those that were ready for war, plus his reserves. Each chariot had a commander (Exodus 14:7). They must have seemed a monstrous destroyer to the entrapped and humanly defenseless slaves.³²

There was no reasoning with Pharaoh then. Like the merciless guards who beat Brother Yun, Pharaoh was the epitome of satanic vengefulness. A stream of wrath poured from him, seeking to devour the people of Yahweh. It was as if he could pour out a flood of water (destroying people) after the "woman" (a symbol of Yahweh's pure people) to destroy her (Revelation 12:14-17).

In the 600 chariots of Pharaoh (Exodus 14:10), we find a symbol of all the forces of human power intent on destroying Yahweh's people. We may expect to be pursued by the entire world, under Satan's power. Remember, then, that the fallen angel will fail, like Pharaoh of old. No matter how threatening his edicts and army may appear, he is a defeated foe.

Rameses, formerly the Mayor of Zarw, was the new commander of the Egyptian army.⁶ Exodus 14 tells how his army of 600 chariots

overtook the Children of Israel by the sea. The sight and sound of this vast army racing swiftly through the canyon made Israel “sore afraid,” in fact, terrified! It was amply apparent that destruction and death were rapidly closing in with the dusty clouds billowing from the ominous onslaught. Weaponless and trapped, their 600,000 untrained warriors felt helpless, falling quickly into despair. In significance, 600,000 is more than just the number of warriors among the Children of Israel. The number is symbolic of being focused on human power, rendering us powerless. It is indicative of human inadequacy.



They had only days before,

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exchanged their weapons from Egypt for the cloud from Heaven. They had already witnessed many miracles, but now in the face of this terrible human force, the mighty power of Yahweh was forgotten and fear rose within them. Moses spoke words of faith to “calm” the multitude. The Cloud over them was to be their defense now. Could they trust Yahweh? Would they trust Him? This test will come to us all for when we put our lives, our safety completely in the hand of the Father, we will be tested.

The multitude, then, headed through a canyon area, called the Wadi Watir, which led to the sea. The Bible, in Exodus 14:3, says, *"They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in."* If you can imagine a few million ex-slaves caught in a canyon, you might tend to justify their first provocation: “Did you bring us out here just to have us killed in this wilderness?” they had complained. How quickly doubts take over when faith is tested!

THE WAITING TEST

The Egyptians marching after them, sent thunder through the canyons. How long they were aware of the advancing army, we do not know. But the Bible does state that they crossed the Red Sea on the eighth day out from the Passover-Exodus. That means the escaping slaves had to set up camp several times before they arrived at the seaside. They may have had a day or more to "stress," or to "pray." But Israel was not being called upon to arise and fight. They were being called to a greater test. They were just to be still! The Children of Israel were being called to wait upon Yahweh. What a test this was for those warriors among them. What a test it will be for Yahweh's end-time people to wait patiently upon Him for deliverance.

It is easy, when reading the two accounts, to laud Brother Yun's faith while mentally chiding the Children of Israel. But the experience of ancient Israel isn't given as a historical tidbit, which we may learn from the relative comfort of our uninvolved easy chairs. These stories and experiences are a warning. This same test will come to all who would enter the Promised Land. When the test of this campsite experience comes to you, will you be still in the face of fear while your captors are even at your door? You will, if you have prayerfully learned from the ensamples of those who tread the wilderness before you. You will if you are forming habits now of patiently trusting in Yahweh. Remember, He will never leave you nor forsake you (Hebrews 13:5).

As always, God was in control of Israel's crisis. Unbeknownst to them, He was already turning them toward the very point of their deliverance. But as Yahweh has promised to do nothing without revealing His plan to His servant, the prophet (Amos 3:7), who, in this case, was Moses; instructions were given to Moses to gather the people on the shore of the sea. And the people believed the prophet!

The words of Moses and the memory of their deliverance from Egypt helped to reassure them that the God of their fathers was the Almighty Supreme God of the Universe. But faith is not gained by impressive demonstrations. Faith is a gift to every man (Romans 12:3) to be developed in the darkroom of pressure. How could they know that out

of the darkest night shines the brightest light to the one who depends totally upon Yahweh! They were about to learn.



Archaeology reveals the exact site where they took the route through the mountains to a fortress beach on the west side of the Gulf of Aqaba. On this narrow strip of beach, amateur archaeologist, Ron Wyatt, found a pillar inscribed and erected by King Solomon, marking the place of Israel's departure into the Red Sea.³⁴ That pillar became a memorial commemorating Yahweh's mighty deliverance. The Bible even mentions this column!

In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the Lord at its border. Isaiah 19:19

The column has since been removed and placed in a museum.

But, on the eighth day out from Egypt, there was no physical sign to assure the great multitude then entrapped on all sides. No possible escape route presented itself for the terror-stricken multitude. There were only the words of Moses, who spoke calmly of trust in Divine Care. Then on the eve of their deliverance, the flame moved behind them, later becoming a cloud of smoke. The cloud formed a wall behind them while the Rod of God pointed the way ahead.

Now is the time to develop faith in the Father. Now is the time to learn to trust Him. Now is the time to know the Word of the Almighty! When the testing is upon you, it is too late to strengthen faith. And it was too late for most in the great throng. The sound of the mighty approaching army rendered the Israelites virtually faithless and overwhelmed with fear.

Would you not be afraid if you faced such a body of water in front of you, and no escape on either side? The Bible warns that fear will overtake many in the last days.

Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth... Luke 21:26.

TO FEAR OR NOT TO FEAR

Fear is a terrible tormentor. But we are instructed to: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer..." Revelation 2:10.

Those who fear, fail to put their faith in the Word of God, and they are the first "in the pool," –the Lake of Fire, that is (Revelation 21:8). Perfect love casts out fear, however (1 John 4:18). But, in a world



where love is reserved for self and for those who affirm one's self image, little is known about "perfect love." During the wilderness journey, Moses was taught and tested on this very point. So will each of us be who make it across the "desert." But, here at *Pi Hahiroth*, the assembly needed to "be still and know" that Yahweh is God. This was their test.

The Children of Israel were given additional instructions as well. They were to prepare camp, get a good night's sleep, and await daylight with full confidence that the Great I Am would handle the enemy. The fire wall behind them allowed them to rest even in the presence of their enemies (Psalm 23:4-5). Pharaoh had failed his golden opportunity, and Israel was about to ignore the "test preparation" they had just completed in Egypt. There was no more time to review the promises and evidences of God's covenanted care for them; they were now facing the "test question," and many responded, "Is this not what we told you in Egypt, Moses? We told you to leave us alone! We were managing all right there. For it would be better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in this wilderness!"

(Exodus 14:12). This was their first provocation of Yahweh. Sadly, they had just failed this test.

The maxim behind this complaint goes something like this: "It is better to live somehow than not to live at all." Some adjust it to fit their employment problems: "It is better to work on God's times than to not have a job." But the Bible says, "He who saves his life will lose it," (Matthew 16:25) It is only those who surrender in trust to God, who will find salvation.

We must fully surrender to Yahweh, as Brother Yun did, and acknowledge that God is in charge of our lives. And whether we live or die, is His decision. We will remain in the difficulty just as long as it serves His good purpose. But, we will choose to remain submitted in His hands whatever the trial.

Many Bible passages refer to the Red Sea experience as a type of the liberty exemplified in the Christian who walks not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Just when it seems all is lost, our God enters the drama, and all is saved! As then, so spiritually today, when one lays down his weapons at Etham, he will be pursued and overtaken by the enemy. Yahweh allows this test to try our resolve to rely upon Him wholly. When once we are determined to follow the Saviour with our whole heart, we



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must be alert to avoid the trap to discourage, disillusion, and destroy, our resolve to be perfectly committed to obedience and trust.³⁵

Pharaoh's army approached from the north, possibly from the military base at *Succoth* (a name which suggests something temporary). "North" becomes prophetic in Daniel 11. Satan, the real "king

of the north," having usurped the position (Isaiah 14:18), will also pursue the people of God in his press south. His power will be short-lived, "temporary." But, in the divine destruction of the "600" chariots we find a metaphor of God's promised deliverance from the arsenal of Satan, which is yet to arise against His true followers.

Pharaoh's army overtook the fugitives while they were camping by the sea at *Pi Hahiroth*, the place meaning, not only "to pour wrath out of the mouth, but also to "Be still and know," as in Psalms 46:10.

*Be still and know that I
am God; I will be exalted
among the heathen, I will
be exalted in the earth.*



You know the rest of the story, how Yahweh did the impossible and parted the sea so that His Children could walk across on dry land. And as the Egyptian army was decimated in the sea, joyful praise and worship took place on the eastern shore. The Great I Am was exalted that day among the heathen, and in the earth!

Without a doubt, Yahweh's people in the End will face similar seemingly insurmountable traps, when they will need to have the faith to follow the holy fire; and courage to stand against the fear. Again, Yahweh will be exalted in the face of the enemies of His people, and in the earth!

Thus, the name of the campsite, *Pi Hahiroth*, reveals the controversy between Yahshua and His Enemy over God's people, then and now. From God's perspective: "Be still and know and I am in control." From Satan's perspective: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman... and there was war...and the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman...and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood," (Revelation 12:17a, 7, 9, 15). "Be still; this is the wrath of the dragon!"

And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever, Exodus 14:13.

Significantly, we find a precise parallel to this crisis on a personal level: When we recognize our own helplessness, the trap we are in, and the impossibility to escape the inevitable, we may cry out in full surrender:

"Nothing in my hands I bring; Simply to the cross I cling."³⁶

Man's extremity is God's opportunity, for the man who "fears" (honors and highly regards) Yahweh. Nevertheless, for the unconverted, fear is a treacherous tyrant, and it comes in many forms. Certainly, feeling trapped produces fear, but there is not always a physical entrapment as the cause. Peter's denial of Christ had started as over-confidence, lack of prayer, and fear of personal loss of esteem before strangers. In a matter of a few short hours, Peter had, argued against the Word of the Son of God, slept when he should have prayed, pridefully over-stated his position with the Messiah, lied, and cursed the Son of God to His face—all before the rooster crowed.³⁷



Peter failed. But thankfully, for him, he still had time to do "the supplementary packet" and relearn the lesson. By God's grace, he would later pass the test which he had so miserably failed in the first attempt. But Israel would have to redo this lesson numerous times, in different settings. Most refused to learn, or to remember what had been learned. By failing to keep these lessons in mind, the people were preparing for a destiny of death, rather than Paradise.

Although Israel's faith was only in its infancy, having been based on expediency to survive; it was an obedient faith that acted on the Word. It was a rational faith, resting not on feelings, but on the

Almighty's promise. It was an expectant faith, leading them into the midst of the sea on dry land. It was also a personal faith, each heeding the conditions of the promise. Furthermore, it had to be a present faith which says not, "Maybe sometime in the future," but "Now is the need, and now He will supply it."³⁸

By faith they passed through the Red Sea as on dry land, which the Egyptians essaying to do, were drowned, Hebrews 11:29.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE TOWER

Amazingly, while the Egyptian army approached from behind, the symbol of their deliverance stood before the camp. Israel was camped facing *Migdol*,³⁹ which means "tower." The Israelites were camped in the presence of *Migdol*, in the view of the tower. The mention of it in the brief sketch of the surroundings on the western side of the Red Sea crossing, tells us something of its importance. In their time of helplessness they were under surveillance from the tower. Someone had his eye on the frantic people, and that Someone was Yahweh!

"The Name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous runneth into it and is safe," Proverbs 18:10

...for His Eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me!²⁰



When you are in a trap, there is a "tower;" The Almighty sees and will send help:

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it, 1 Corinthians 10:13.

There are many circumstances in life in which we cannot see Yahweh's purpose. This

was one of them. But God's people were in view of the Tower all the time. How often we fear needlessly, when we are in view of His mighty Tower, if we will just look!

The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe, Proverbs 18:10

Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer, From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy, Psalms 61:1-3.

Israel was not only under Yahweh's watchful eye, in the metaphor of Migdol, the multitude were also facing *Baal-zephon* (Numbers 33:7); meaning "lord of the north," "secret," "hidden." So the imagery of the "controversy between Yahweh and Satan" over Israel (those who prevail with God) was active at the Red Sea: Satan to destroy them, and Yahweh to deliver them.

When the soul senses the urgency of the hour and moves into the will of God by faith—we call it conversion—the power of Satan presents a struggle, but when broken, the soul is raised to God in praise and thanksgiving. The people of God crossed the Red Sea under the Rod of God and under His watchful eye from the Tower.

The Red Sea commemorates our spiritual deliverance from the false "lord of the north" by baptism. Baptism speaks of spiritual death and rebirth. It is about deliverance from the pomp and pleasure of this world.⁴⁰ Then, those who have "prevailed with God" move on through "the wilderness" of thorny trials, with a memorial of baptism marking their choice to no longer be slaves to sin.

But the most important lesson of *Pi Hahiroth* isn't found in the actual crossing of the Red Sea. Rather it is present in the positioning of the camp itself. When we are in a trap facing "the lord of the north," *Pi*



Hahiroth reminds us to look the other way. There stands the Migdol (Tower), our faithful refuge in the day of trouble. Taking your “eyes” off of the danger, the threat, the terror; may you never lose sight of His Tower.

And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses, Exodus 13:14.



SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THREE

- *Pi Hahiroth* means “to subside, to calm; to be quiet in the face of wrath.” Like Israel at the Red Sea, the end-time people of God will be faced with life-threatening crises and persecuting wrath. In such circumstances, we are to trust Yahweh enough to be still and await His intervention.
- The *tikkun* of this site is to **be still** and know that Yahweh is God, even while the wicked “king of the North” bears down upon us, bringing imminent death.
- When the Children of Israel turned their eyes in the direction of their deliverance, *Migdol* was in full view. *Migdol*, meaning “tower” is a reminder to the last-day saints that Yahweh’s Name is our strong Tower. We are invited to run into it and be safe.