

## *Deliverance for Lost Sheep: Dophkah*

*"And they took their journey out of the Wilderness of Sin, and encamped in Dophkah," Numbers 33: 12 (KJV).*

*D*ophkah, the next stop on Israel's journey, affords yet another shadow picture for end-time Israel's edification. At *Dophkah* we see the template of what all spiritual Israel is called to do: serve the Father setting other captives free.

The fact is that the Christian's duty is to work to free those caught in bondage to sin has been preached by many a minister, as was the case in the following true story.

During the 1960's, a middle-aged Christian lady, whom we'll call Caroline, was deeply affected by her minister's Sabbath message. Troubling as it had been, the morning message replayed over and over in her mind. Evening came and it was time to retire for the night, but still the pastor's words weighed heavily on Caroline's heart. The minister had said that it was not enough to be a Christian. One must share one's faith, so as to bring others to know Christ. All followers of Christ must be soul winners.

Why did poor Caroline find this message so disturbing? Because, in all of her life, Caroline couldn't think of a single soul she'd ever won for the Saviour." What can I do, Lord (Yahshua)?" she prayed. "Help me win a soul for You." With that prayer and heart-felt desire, Caroline finally fell asleep.

The next morning Caroline saw her first opportunity to share the Saviour's love with another. Brick masons were preparing to repair the wall that edged her yard. "All right, Father. Today I will witness

for You. I will try to win a soul for You today. Please help me to say the right thing."

Nervous, yet determined, Caroline mentally pushed herself out her front door and slowly approached the brick layer on her side of the wall. "Good morning," she began, trying to appear natural.



"Morning," came the reply, the man barely glancing up as he continued with his work.

"Nice day," Caroline continued.

"Yep."

"Are you a Christian?" Carolyn asked, coming straight to the point, with a silent prayer.

No answer.

Reading his silence as a negative response, and hoping to help the man see his need for deliverance, Caroline persisted. "You know we will all face the Judgment. Things are moving quickly that way. Don't you think it is a good idea to get ready?"

"I'm not interested."

"You mean you don't care whether you are saved or lost?" Caroline cried out incredulously.

"I'll take my chances with the rest of the world. If I go down, we'll all go down together," was the mason's cold reply.

Sadly, feeling that she had completely failed, Caroline walked back to her house. Days passed. She felt discouraged whenever the impression came upon her that she should speak to someone about his salvation. So great did her failure loom in her mind, that Caroline couldn't bring herself to try sharing *Yahshua* with someone else.

Then one Wednesday night, at prayer meeting, the pastor invited everyone to share a praise testimony or prayer request. Caroline asked the group to pray over her feeling of inadequacy in witnessing. It seemed that she was a poor servant, unable to help sin's captives find true freedom. To illustrate her need, she related the experience of trying to lead the brick mason to the Lord.

When she sat down, a man arose and moved to sit near her. "Don't be discouraged, Sister," he began. "Your effort was not a failure. I am the man who was working on the other side of the wall. I heard all you said, and it set me to thinking. I decided to come back to God. In fact, I am here tonight because of your effort."

*"Part of accepting  
the Saviour is also  
accepting the  
assignment to serve  
in His vineyard,  
seeking the lost."*

Just like the minister said, whose message bore fruit in Caroline's life; Spiritual Israel isn't to be simply sponges, soaking up the precious words of truth and keeping them hidden. Part of accepting the Saviour is also accepting the assignment to serve in His vineyard, seeking the lost. As the Bible says in Matthew 10:8, "Freely ye have received; freely give."

The joyful duty to share with another is to be carried out prayerfully, whether or not we can see the results. Thus, we are not to let the apparent lack of fruit discourage us, we are all called to labor in His vineyard, trusting the Father to water the seed we have planted.

This opportunity was afforded to ancient Israel in their eighth campsite experience. At *Dophkah*, the Children of Israel were called to share "deliverance" from bondage with other slaves in darkness. *Dophkah* was in a region rich in copper.<sup>97</sup> From artifacts collected there, it was a location with numerous slave-operated copper mines.

### DISCOVERING DOPHKAH

Friends of Ron Wyatt (who discovered the true Mount Sinai and the Red Sea crossing site), in Saudi Arabia, "scouted out" the entire

region around Mount Horeb. They returned to the region on numerous occasions, providing Ron with wonderful footage of their travels throughout the area and its wadis.<sup>98</sup> From their journeys and maps, we may find precise information about the this territory. The team's main purpose was to trace the precise points, mentioned in Scripture, from Israel's journey. From their (and others) explorations and discoveries many telling artifacts have been found to lend detail to Israel's experience in this place.

Here, the Children of Israel were strengthened and unified by the Father's provisions, and the fear of *Yahweh* was upon them. Significantly, these are some of the meanings of the number eight.

*Dophkah*, the name given to this eighth campsite because of Israel's experience there, means "attack," and "knocking." In Latin, it also means to "cut off," or "be cut off."<sup>99</sup> From this biblical name, we may surmise that the Midianites did not appreciate the invasion of their territory. However, the deeper spiritual message indicates a knocking at the door of the heart. Thus, the name, *Dophkah*, like many of the other stations, has both a negative and a positive application.

William Justin Harsha, in his 1896 book, *Sabbath-day Journeys*, specifies that the meaning of the "knocking" at *Dophkah* was a "knocking at the door." The significance of the name is then clearer.

The scriptural connection between "knocking" and the intent to "cut off," or destroy is pictured in Judges 19:22. Here we find the story of evil men attacking a Levite's house, pounding on the door demanding entrance that they might bring harm to his visitors. Figuratively, it is the rapping of the persecutor bringing destruction. But, at *Dophkah*, the effect was more to threaten and unsettle than to destroy.

As we will address in more detail later, Israel had deliberately skirted Edom to avoid any confrontation. But, between Israel and the Mountain there were giants yet to be met. All of this was soon to come. Nonetheless, here at Israel's eighth camp the Children of Israel passed through hostile territory, facing implied threats that thankfully didn't materialize.

Because of the hostility Israel faced in the region of *Dophkah*, interaction with the locals was avoided. Thus, Israel would have experienced a "can't-buy-or-sell" situation during their stay in this region. The very fact that Israel was so careful to circumvent meeting with the Edomites suggests there must have been some means of visually distinguishing them from those with the mark of Esau.

Thus, Israel's experience at *Dophkah* bears interesting parallels to the soon-coming "Mark of the Beast," foretold in Revelation 13:16,17.

*And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*



### SETTING THE CAPTIVES FREE

Historical records and inscriptions found in stone at the *Dophkah* mine site show, "that in this part of the mountains (there) were extensive mines of copper and turquoise. For centuries these mines had been worked, the Egyptians sending hither their political prisoners. It was a place of penal servitude, as Siberia is at the present day," wrote Dr. Harsha. "There were noblemen and slaves, the innocent and the guilty, men, women, and children, all driven to their underground tasks by cruel overseers. Seven hundred and fifty soldiers guarded the entrances of the mines to see that none escaped."<sup>100</sup>

*"...Inscriptions on the rocks near the mines at Dophkah tell us that there were Hebrews enslaved there."*

As Herbert Byrne explained, in *The Gospel of the Canaan Journey*, "...*Dophkah*... was a place of penal servitude where Egypt sent prisoners to work... The slaves were both helpless and hopeless in their slavery... Because the glory cloud of God led Israel to *Dophkah*, they were able to free the slaves there."<sup>101</sup>



The inscriptions on the rocks near the mines at *Dophkah* tell us that there were Hebrews enslaved there. (Note the uniquely Hebrew menorah still visible in the rock face near one of *Dophkah*'s mines, shown on the left.)

*Dophkah*, as mentioned earlier, was a copper mining prison. Copper itself reveals insights into the wilderness experience there at *Dophkah*, for copper stands for "strongholds" of the enemy in one's life.<sup>102</sup> Thus, when we are set free from bondage, it is our responsibility to serve the Master by aiding to set other captives free.

"...Copper stands for 'strongholds' of the enemy in one's life."

To the slaves working in the darkness, freedom to enter the light is most precious. Some writers claim that Joshua was one of the slaves freed in the *Dophkah* deliverance. Is it possible that Joshua joined the multitude at this juncture? Had he been a known leader, and a threat to Pharaoh, thus exiled in this mining prison? Possibly. There are reasons to espouse this theory, but we cannot be certain.<sup>103</sup> Nonetheless, we know without doubt that numerous Hebrew slaves were delivered from their bondage in *Dophkah*. Former captives freed by the Passover blood, now brought deliverance to those enslaved in the darkness of the enemy stronghold.

Archaeological evidence shows that the mine was abruptly shut down. Abandoned mining tools, untouched in these caves, reveal that the work there was suddenly interrupted. Like a gold-rush ghost town, where furniture and dishes from a bygone era were all abandoned in haste, the *Dophkah* mining machinery was still in place at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, when first discovered by explorers.<sup>104</sup>

## PARALLELS FOR THE LAST DAYS

Israel's experience at *Dophkah* was two-fold, as we have already mentioned. First, this region represented an oppressive environment making it impossible for the Children of Israel to buy or sell with the native Edomites. Next, while Israel remained at this campsite numerous slaves were set free from the darkness of the enemy's bondage, emblemized in the copper mines.



In putting these two experiences together a significant parallel is drawn concerning final Israel. We are given a very clear template for the final events in the Book of Acts. Here we note that it was after the Early Christians had received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that they began the Gospel work in earnest. On the very day that the Fire of Pentecost fell upon them, the apostles preached with such power that three thousand slaves to sin were set free.

Truly this was a powerful day of deliverance and a mighty moment in the cause of God. Threatened, the enemy of souls began to launch a major attack against the followers of Christ that increased in intensity from that day forward. Thus, the work to free sin's slaves and the persecution of the saints went together as cause and effect.

In the last days, this pattern of victory and deliverance countered by hatred and persecution will replay again. In tandem with the mighty spread of the Gospel message bringing deliverance to the captives, the persecution of God's people will intensify like an ever-tightening noose. What will start as prejudice against final saints, will grow into economic hardship, finally to mature into full-fledged maltreatment. Thus the *Dophkah* picture of freeing the slaves is joined with the hardship of being unable to buy or sell.

Having drunk of the wells of salvation (at *Elim*), ancient Israel had been prepared to bring deliverance to another. Thus, one of the

earliest assignments we receive after being set free from sin ourselves, is to labor for the deliverance of nominal Israel. Just as ancient Israel worked to free the slaves, many of whom were Israelites, at *Dophkah* before evangelizing the world, so final Israel are first sent to the lost sheep of its own house. This was the context of Yahshua's command to freely give what we have received.

*These twelve (Yahshua) sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles (representing the heathen lost in the world), and into any city of the Samaritans (representing those caught up in paganized churches) enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give, Matthew 10:5-8.*

#### A MESSAGE FOR LAODICEA

*Dophkah* also offers a vital calling to end-time Laodiceans. In the time of the Early Christian church all seven of the churches, found in Revelation, existed simultaneously. Laodicea was the last of these churches.

*...What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea, Revelation 1:11.*

*"... Final Israel are first sent to the lost sheep of its own house."*

These churches were not only literal, they are also figurative. In the last days, these seven churches represent the seven groups which claim to comprise final Israel. Of these, five represent unsaved conditions, as God has "aught" against them. Only two are above reproach. They are: Philadelphia, representing the group who serve

Yahweh faithfully right to the very end; and Smyrna, signifying those who are martyred for their loyalty to God.

Out of all the remaining five churches, against whom Yahweh has “aught,” one stands out arguably as the worst: Laodicea. Why is the Laodicean condition so much worse than any other form of nominal Christianity? Because it is noted for its darkness, which is so great, the Laodiceans can no longer perceive their true condition.

The cause of this terrible blindness is that they are neither completely belonging to God (spiritually hot), nor are they completely devoted to the things of the world (spiritually cold). Instead of committing to one way or the other, Laodiceans try to keep one hand on the world and one hand on eternal life. In this lukewarm state, their condition is far more dangerous than if they were completely cold.

*“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew (vomit) thee out of My mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,”  
Revelation 3:14-17.*

Characterized by such great spiritual blindness; the Laodicean condition parallels the dark bondage of the slaves in the *Dophkah* copper mines.

*Dophkah*, the dark realm of enslavement for numerous Israelites, parallels the blind bondage of spiritual Israel in the Laodicean condition. Significantly, *Dophkah*, meaning “knocking,” points to the Source of hope and help for lost Laodiceans. As it says in Revelation 3:18-20:

*“I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with*

*eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."*

Here the remedy for the disease of Laodicean darkness is made plain. Those caught in bondage to sin, who believe they are just fine and already possess all that they need for salvation, must first seek fire-tried gold. This represents a purified character, made after the Pattern of Yahshua's loveliness in the trials of the Refiner's fire.

Next, Laodiceans are counseled to be clothed in the white raiment of the Saviour's righteousness (Revelation 19:8). This is followed by a prescription for the eyesalve of true spiritual perception, enabling repentance (Matthew 13:15).

The final part of the divine cure for Laodiceanism is the knocking Saviour, seeking admittance and a personal relationship within the formerly hardened heart.



In the Scriptures "knocking," is most often used in reference to God's knocking at the door of men's hearts. May we develop keenness of spiritual hearing, that we may clearly discern our Saviour's calling, knocking at the door of our hearts.

*"Dophkah, the dark realm of enslavement for numerous Israelites, parallels the blind bondage of spiritual Israel in the Laodicean condition."*

Once admitted, the Saviour promises to enter and dine with us. The Covenant process always ends with a meal. Will Laodicea confirm the Covenant with the Lord? Solemn thought; dubious answer. This is

the picture in Revelation 3:20, as the Saviour stands knocking at the heart's door of Laodicean slaves. His invitation to them is simple and yet profound, "Open the door and I will come in and fellowship with you."

### THE THREE KNOCKS

In the New Testament we actually find three kinds of "knocks." Each is followed by a specific reply. The first is the knock of the Saviour at the door of men's hearts, as mentioned in Laodicea. To this knock, Yahshua pleads for a response: either you open your heart and He will fellowship with you, or you don't and He won't.

At *Dophkah* the freed Israelites opened their hearts in penitence to the knocking appeals of Yahweh. Thus, they dined with Him upon the manna He had prepared. How complete is the parallel between this scene and that in Revelation 3:20! This is the lovely picture of the first Scriptural "knock."

Next, there is the knock of the repentant sinner, whom Christ said He would not cast out.<sup>105</sup> The picture here is of a poor man knocking at a rich man's door asking for, and receiving, bread.

*Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened, Matthew 7:7, 8.*

The third knock is that of the careless seeker who has waited too long. This knocking also applies to Laodicea. For if we fail to partake of deliverance when the Saviour knocks, the day will come when Divine grace is no longer available.

In the biblical parable about the five wise and five foolish virgins, we see the final fulfillment of the *Dophkah* deliverance. All the women are virgins, representing their status as part of spiritual Israel. Significantly, the virgins are not the Bride in the parable. In fact, like the Israelites who offered deliverance to the *Dophkah* Hebrew slaves, the Bride is the one who wakes the sleeping virgins.

*"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," Revelation 22:17.*

The Bride is represented in the body of Israel delivered at Passover, who have already drunk from the waters of salvation for themselves. As we have already discussed, having partaken of Divine grace, these saints are now commissioned to reach out to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Unlike Laodicea's virgins, who are spiritually asleep; the Bride is alert, awake and watchful.

*"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night," 1 Thessalonians 5:4-7.*

Like the Israelites enslaved in the darkness of *Dophkah's* copper mines, those that spiritually sleep are said to be in spiritual darkness. Thus Israel's lost sheep, whom the Bride is commissioned to awaken, are emblemized in the sleeping virgins. Their identity as spiritual virgins associates them with Israel, yet the fact that half are ultimately saved, while the other five are lost shows plainly that their eternal destiny is undecided when they finally open their eyes.

For the slaves at *Dophkah*, the knocking of deliverance brought a choice. Would these Israelites, now released from their dark bondage, choose to join the body of Israel on their march to Canaan? Or would they take the offered physical freedom while turning to take up residences in the realm of the lost? For those who made this latter choice, one form of enslavement was merely exchanged for another. Like the wise virgins of the parable, only those who joined with the main body of Israel in journeying to Canaan could actually find complete freedom.

And what became of the foolish virgins? Here we come to the sobering warning of *Dophkah* ("knocking"), in the portrayal of the third knock. For while the first knock brings the opportunity of true

deliverance and eternal life, and the second knock depicts the response of the awakened heart in seeking the blessing of God, the third knock is made by the foolish virgins, knocking too late.

In the parable, after the door is shut, come the foolish virgins saying, "Lord, open to us! Let us in to life, communion and joy!" (Matthew 25:8-12). But, in this case, the opportunity for deliverance had already passed them by. The door of probation has permanently shut, and no



amount of frantic knocking can open it. This will be the sad condition of many professed followers of God, in the very end. With Laodicean blindness, they will have come right up to the final moments, believing themselves saved. But, their blind belief doesn't change the fact that they are now forever shut out from grace.

Similar to the antediluvians, who pounded futilely on the door of the ark, this knocking yields no salvation. The anti-typical door of final judgment will not be opened for the seekers who come too late (John 6:37).

Thus, in the shadow picture of *Dophkah* comes the warning to all professing Israel. We must heed the Saviour's knock, that we may be promptly delivered from bondage to the enemy and spiritual darkness. This is the calling to all nominal Christians. And the awareness that it truly is a "limited-time offer" lends urgency to the spiritual Israelites who give the call.

*We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation,"*  
2 Corinthians 6:1-2.



## SUMMARY OF CHAPTER EIGHT:

- *Dophkah* means “knocking” and spiritually represents the final call to end-time Laodicea, also known as the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
- *Dophkah* was a region of slave mines, where the Egyptians sent their political prisoners.
- Many Hebrews were enslaved in these copper mines, representing the lost sheep of the house of Israel, enslaved in spiritual darkness.
- Yahweh’s people, who have been set free and have themselves tasted of the Water of Life, are commissioned to help free these slaves of darkness.
- All who are saved from the darkness and enslavement of sin immediately become soul-winners.
- In the last days, the experience of *Dophkah* will be a series of three, biblical knocks:
  1. the Saviour knocks offering the opportunity for life and deliverance – Revelation 3:20
  2. those who accept this deliverance seek for further blessings in knocking on Heaven’s storehouse in prayer - Matthew 7:7, 8
  3. those who reject the last call to lost sheep, believing themselves spiritually fine, will knock on the door of grace too late – Matthew 25:10-12
- Thus, the ultimate message of *Dophkah* is that the knock of grace must be heeded quickly, as the opportunity for deliverance is will soon come to an end.