

III. Reaching Pison: Up to Our Loins

The name of the first is Pison:
that is it which compasseth the whole land
of Havilah, where there is gold” (Genesis 2:11 KJV)

The first river in Genesis is where we find ourselves next. The name of that river is Pison. Pison means *grow up, be grown fat, spread selves, be scattered*. God wants us to mature in Christ so that He can give us heavenly blessings. This is when we find ourselves up to our loins. We are trying to live our life for the Lord, but we are still trying to live our life on this earth at the same time. He wants to get us past that. He wants us to mature in Him, and He wants us to grow up.

The Scripture says, “**Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah.**” Compasseth means *revolve, surround or border*. In order to get to Pison, we must first go through Havilah, and Havilah is not fun. Havilah means *to twist or whirl, to dance, to writhe in pain (especially of parturition) or fear; to wait, to pervert: bear, (make to) bring forth, (make to) calve, dance, drive away, fall grievously (with pain), fear, form, great, grieve, hope, look, make, be in pain, be much (sore), pained, rest, shake, shapen, (be) sorrowful, stay, tarry, travail (with pain), tremble, trust, wait carefully, (patiently), be wounded*.

The first 2 stages I mentioned would be similar to the first couple of rides on a colt. If we do not have the first 3 stages and jump to Stage 4, you had better be a good bronc rider and get ready for the rodeo. If you want to live out your dreams of being in a John Wayne movie this is fine, but don't expect true unity and willing communication. The main things in the first 3 stages are to get willing submission (hindquarters/doubling) and build as much confidence as possible. It is in these stages that we set the foundation, and most of our work is done in the comfort and security of a pen. However, in order to reach Pison (maturity) the horse must go through Havilah. We must open the gate and face the scary world.

The horse needs to go through a little discomfort at times, so that comfort may be appreciated. “It takes pressure for relief to be effective, and relief for pressure to be effective” (Martin Black). It is through Havilah that we begin to kill off their self-preservation and they find total peace in us. “**That in me ye may have peace: In the world ye shall have tribulation**” (John 16:33). Remember that “tribulation” in the Greek comes from the root word meaning “pressure.” It is through getting a little tight, unsure, and losing confidence that confidence can be gained and reaching a deeper level of submission can be achieved. It is through Havilah that our self-preservation is killed off and we are able to reach Pison, “grown up (maturity).” Just like our horse, until our self-preservation is totally killed off, we must go through Havilah. Although Havilah is not fun, it is very crucial to the advancement of our maturity and enables us to achieve “true unity.”

Now to get back to my story and what the Lord showed me about Havilah. I was trying to serve the Lord and I was willing to leave everything behind and follow Him. It was at this time that Satan started to really tempt me. I was a threat to Satan and he was going to try everything he had to get me off the straight and narrow path I was on. It was during this same time that God

wanted me to mature in Him. For it is through maturity He guides us to the gold that He has waiting for us.

During Hiddekel the Lord had brought me a great deal of money for my horses and He told me to sell everything. I knew that this was what the Lord had told me, but I let Satan convince me that God did not really mean, "Give up everything to follow him." I kept all my horses and because I was feeling better, I took 15 outside horses to train for the public. I began to get wrapped up in the world again.

The Lord then stepped back and I began to go through Havilah. Within 1 year after He had told me to sell everything, my wife and I had 8 horses die. In the past, out of the roughly 30 mares my family owned, if we lost 4 horses throughout the entire year that was a lot. With my 10 mares, and roughly 25 head of horses total, 8 horses died. Within 2 years, my parents were divorced, and my brother and I tried to take over our family's horse operation. My brother was in the army and I was trying to go to school in Montana.

This put a tremendous amount of strain on my mother, who took care of the horses while we were gone. Our horse operation did not prosper and ended up only costing us money. I had the headache of trying to make our horse operation be successful and riding colts to pay the bills. Meanwhile my wife and I were in our first year of marriage. I was going to school full time on a rodeo scholarship, and my wife was working. I felt like I had drifted a long way from where I once was in Hiddekel.

The Lord then gave me a scripture, "**Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit**" (Ecclesiastes 4:6 KJV). Travail means to *toil, work severely, wearing effort, worry* and vexation means *feeding upon; the root means to graze, pasture*. The Lord showed me in one hand I had my business of riding horses for the public, and in the other hand I had my business of raising and selling horses. One gave me a sense of *quietness* and the other a sense of *travail and vexation*. He then gave me another verse. "**The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep. I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner**" (Ecclesiastes 5:12-13).

He showed me that there is a sense of freedom in working for the public. The Lord could lead me wherever He chose while I was riding horses for other people. However, I could not leave my business at home because it needed managing. I often stayed up at night trying to think how I was going to make my business of selling horses work. I had spent a lot of time trying to build up a nice group of mares and I had 12 head of well-bred roans and greys. I have always been a sucker for color, and I had a sense of pride and accomplishment in the horses I was selling.

However, my horses were ties to this world. Christ tells us to leave everything behind and follow him, "**Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me'**" (Matthew 16:24). "**Jesus answered, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me'**" (Matthew 19:21). I was focusing on how I was going to

make our business work, selling and buying horses. It became a *wearing effort*, and I would often *worry* about the business. Then the Lord showed me that these things were a *vexation* on the Spirit. When we are in His Spirit, the Spirit begins to eat on our flesh, helping us to become like Christ. However, the more time we spend thinking about the world, the flesh begins to *feed upon* our Spirit and we fall back into the ways of the world.