



Tomorrow marks the 66<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sudden and unprovoked attack on the Republic of Korea (South) by Communist North Korean Forces preceded by a heavy barrage of intense artillery fire across the Demilitarized Zone. The South Koreans were practically defenseless against the onslaught of infantry and Soviet-supplied armor units pouring into the southern half of the Korean peninsula. The unarmed population fled south ahead of the leading elements of the North Korean Army, carrying what few position they could salvage, over bulging roadways and bombed or sabotaged bridges. It was a sad and tragic moment in the history of the Korean people whose land represented a strategic causeway both to Japan and China.

A decade ago, I had the sorrowful duty to conduct a funeral service for a Korean lady of my church – her name was Im. She had passed away after a long and hard-fought battle with Leukemia leaving behind an aged mother and young daughter. The aged mother was approaching 90 years in age, and the daughter was in her early teens. It was a sad thing to see a mother (Mrs. Yi) of such age mourn the loss of a daughter that had shared such unusual, and near miraculous, experiences of the Korean War.

When the war began, many families were separated. Some lived in the south that had family also in the north. After the Inchon landing resulting in the liberation of Seoul and much of the territory lying above the DMZ, many refugees fled the north seeking relief and safety from the harsh Communist regime of the north. Mrs. Yi's husband was one of those who fled south. He left behind his wife (Mrs. Yi) and their two-year-old daughter, Im. His plan was to go south, find a refugee camp that offered the essentials of life, and then return to recover his wife and daughter. Unfortunately, the intensity of battle along the Imjin River dividing North and South precluded his return. It was hazardous for any soul to expose himself in the open hills and rice paddies in the vicinity of the old DMZ. But he was able to get messages to his wife. It would be less dangerous for her, being a woman with child, to flee south than a military-age male.

The plan was made for Mrs. Yi to cross the Imjin River into South Korea under cover of darkness and to meet her husband at one of the designated refugee camps. The plan was

complicated by the constant surveillance that existed of the River both day and night. It was a dangerous proposition. But early one morning, Mrs. Yi saw that the view of the River occluded by dense fog – so dense that one could barely see beyond arm’s length. She decided this was her moment of opportunity. Tying the baby to her back by a blanket, Mrs. Yi began to ford the Imjin River at a point known to be its shallowest. She evaded being sighted by the ruthless Communist forces. Reaching the southern side, and traveling some distance south, she sought her husband at the reported refugee camp – but he was not there. He had been transferred to another camp further south. Trudging on with the baby as her lightest (and only) burden, she finally arrived at the camp at which she believed her husband had been sent. There were literally thousands of refugees there. It would be a daunting task to find her husband among so many; yet, the moment she entered the camp, she spotted a man whom she immediately identified as her husband – and it WAS!

Now more than fifty years later, this poor mother (Mrs. Yi) sat in a funeral in Enterprise, Alabama, for her daughter – the same daughter whom she had carried on that long trudge south and across the foggy waters of the Imjin River. It seemed tragic, indeed. But her daughter had not crossed the Imjin alone for she had her mother as her protector and keeper. Now, however, Daughter Im had come to another river that must be crossed by all of us. No one on earth can see us across, or be our burden-barrier in crossing the unsettled waters of Jordan Banks. The great mass of humanity shall make that final crossing of Jordan Waters alone, for they have none to call upon for their help. They have failed, in life, to make friends with that heavenly Personage who can bear them across the Jordan and bring them to the happy shores beyond. Others have, indeed, heard the voice of the Good shepherd, followed Him while seed time and harvest remained, and have that mighty Hand upon which to call for their help at the banks of Jordan Waters.

*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.* (Psalm 121:1-3)

We read in the Book of Exodus of another crossing of great waters (the Red Sea) of the people of God. They had someone to bear them across on dry land – to lead them, and to be their rear guard as well. That someone was the great Pillar of fire by Night, and Cloud by Day which both led and followed the Children of God across the Red Sea Waters and the wilderness beyond.

*21 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: 22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.* (Ex 13:21-22)

*1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ”* (1 Cor 10:1-4)

It is indeed a blessing that Daughter Im had found that security in Christ upon which to call at the fading moments of this earthly life that precedes the brilliant and resplendent Light beyond.

Not long after, Mrs. Yi also came to those same shores, was escorted across by her Lord and to a happy and glorious reunion with the daughter whom she once carried across another river those many years past. And she, too, slept with her fathers. Of such, I feel confident.