

**~ETHAM (110)**  
**(E'tham)**

- The second campsite listed by Moses in Israel's march out of Egypt.
- And they proceeded to depart from Succoth and to encamp at **Etham** at the edge of the wilderness. (**Exodus 13:20**)
- And they proceeded to pull away from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month. Directly the day after the Passover the sons of Israel went out with uplifted hand before the eyes of all the Egyptians. (**Numbers 33:3**)
- All the while the Egyptians were burying those whom Yehowah had struck among them, that is, all the firstborn, and upon their gods Yehowah had executed judgments. (**Numbers 33:4**)
- So the sons of Israel pulled away from Rameses and went camping in Succoth. (**Numbers 33:5**)
- Then they pulled away from Succoth and went camping in **Etham**, which is on the edge of the wilderness. (**Numbers 33:6**)
- Next they pulled away from **Etham** and turned back toward Pihahiroth, which is in view of Baal-zephon, and they went camping before Migdol. (**Numbers 33:7**)
- It was at **Etham**, on the edge of the wilderness, that the Israelites made a change in their direction, turning back toward Pihahiroth, where the crossing of the sea took place.
- Next they pulled away from **Etham** and turned back toward Pihahiroth, which is in view of Baal-zephon, and they went camping before Migdol. (**Numbers 33:7**)
- After that they pulled away from Pihahiroth and went passing through the midst of the sea to the wilderness and kept marching a three-day journey in the wilderness of **Etham** and took up camping at Marah. (**Numbers 33:8**)

- This would indicate that **Etham** could have been the point of exit from Egypt had not the Israelites been divinely directed to alter their course.
- This turning back caused Pharaoh to reason that the Israelites were wandering in confusion in the wilderness and provided him with an incentive to pursue them. This led to God's execution of judgment on the Egyptians at the Red Sea.
- Yehowah now spoke to Moses, saying; (**Exodus 14:1**)
- Speak to the sons of Israel, that they should turn back and encamp before Pihahiroth between Migdol and the sea in view of Baal-zephon. In front of it you are to encamp by the sea. (**Exodus 14:2**)
- Then Pharaoh will certainly say respecting the sons of Israel, They are wandering in confusion in the land. The wilderness has closed in upon them. (**Exodus 14:3**)
- So I shall indeed let Pharaoh's heart become obstinate, and he will certainly chase after them and I shall get glory for myself by means of Pharaoh and all his military forces, and the Egyptians will certainly know that I am Yehowah. Accordingly they did just that. (**Exodus 14:4**)
- Some scholars endeavor to place **Etham** at the eastern end of the Wadi Tumilat, North of the Bitter Lakes. However, this is because they connect the Hebrew '*E-tham*' with the Old Egyptian word for fortress *htm*.
- Even if such connection were correct, there were a number of places to which that Egyptian name was applied. Since **Etham** was not on the northern route out of Egypt, which would have led by the way of the land of the Philistines.
- And it came about at the time of Pharaoh's sending the people away that God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines just because it was near, for God said; It might be the people will feel regret when they see war and will certainly return to Egypt. (**Exodus 13:17**)

- It can only be said to have been at some point North of the Red Sea and evidently at the border of the wilderness region forming the Northwest part of the Sinai Peninsula.
- After that they pulled away from Pihahiroth and went passing through the midst of the sea to the wilderness and kept marching a three-day journey in the wilderness of **Etham** and took up camping at Marah. (**Numbers 33:8**)
- Later Moses caused Israel to depart from the Red Sea and they went out to the wilderness of Shur and marched on for three days in the wilderness, but they did not find water. (**Exodus 15:22**)
- Would seem to indicate that the wilderness region by **Etham** corresponds to the wilderness of Shur. Or, if the names are not interchangeable, then, depending upon which region was the larger, the wilderness of **Etham** may have included that of Shur or else was itself a part of the wilderness of Shur.

**See Also SHUR**