

## PARADISE GAINED, LOST AND RESTORED (EB)

IT IS HARD FOR US TO ENVISION PARADISE. THERE IS SO MUCH THAT IS NOT LIKE PARADISE ALL AROUND US... EVEN WITHIN US... THAT IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE PARADISE.

BUT AS WE THINK BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF TIME AS WE KNOW IT, WHEN THE FIRST COUPLE, ADAM AND EVE, LIVED IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN, IT MUST HAVE BEEN PURE PARADISE.

GOD HAD JUST CREATED THE EARTH WITH ALL ITS AMENITIES AND UPON LOOKING ON IT MADE THE PRONOUNCEMENT THAT IT WAS ALL "VERY GOOD." Ge 1:31 "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was very good*. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

Ge 2:8--10: "And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow *every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food*; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. \* \* \* Ge 2:15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."

THERE WAS EVERYTHING FOR A TRANQUIL LIFE, AND EASY BUT CNSTRUCTIVE WORK TO DO... TO DRESS AND KEEP THE GARDEN... NOT TOIL AND STRUGGLE.

THE BIBLE DOES NOT SAY, BUT I IMAGINE THE TEMPERATURE WAS JUST RIGHT, JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF SUN AND SHADE TO MAKE LIFE PLEASANT... (AT LEAST THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THE FIRST COUPLE WERE UNCOMFORTABLE, LIVING IN THEIR "BIRTHDAY SUITS"!)

THEY WALKED AND TALKED WITH GOD... IF THEY WANTED TO KNOW SOMETHINIG, ALL THEY HAD TO DO WAS ASK HIM.

THE BIBLE SAYS, Ge 2:19 "And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. 20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field..."

THERE IS NO INDICATION OF ANY FEROCITY OR THREAT OF VIOLENCE FROM ANY OF THE ANIMALS. AS A MATTER OF FACT, IT SEEMS THAT THERE WAS ACTUALLY COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTIVITY BETWEEN MAN AND ANIMAL.

IN THAT REGARD, THE FIRST THREE VERSES OF GENESIS CHAPTER 3 SAY, "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And *he said unto the woman*, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

THE SERPENT WAS NOT IN ITS PRESENT SLITHERING FORM AT THAT TIME... THAT WAS A CURSE BROUGHT UPON THE SERPENT FOR BEGUILING THE WOMAN. BUT WHEN HE CAME UP TO HER AND SPOKE, SHE DID NOT SCREAM AND RUN, AS MOST OF YOU LADIES WOULD TODAY. IT SEEMED TO BE JUST AN "EVERYDAY OCCURRENCE."

AND SINCE EVERYTHING HAD BEEN PRONOUNCED AS BEING "VERY GOOD," I DON'T THINK THE ANIMALS HAD ANIMOSITY AND CONFLICT BETWEEN THEMSELVES BACK THEN AS THEY DO TODAY.

CAN YOU IMAGINE THE DOGS AND THE CATS, THE LIONS AND THE LAMBS, THE TIGERS AND THE MALIBU, AND ALL THE OTHER ANIMALS THAT ARE TYPICALLY PREDATORS AGAINST EACH OTHER... ALL GETTING ALONG TOGETHER WITH NOAH ON THE ARK FOR A YEAR?

NOWADAYS... SINCE THE PARADISE HAS BEEN LOST, ALL THE ANIMALS LIVE IN FEAR OF EACH OTHER, AND THE FEAR OF MANKIND... AND NOT ONLY FOR ANIMALS, BUT ALSO FOR MANKIND, THERE IS CONTINUOUS SUFFERING AND HARDSHIP.

MANY YEARS AGO, WHEN MY DAD WAS A KID IN SCHOOL, HE WROTE IN ONE OF HIS BOOKS "NATURE IN THE RAW IS CRUEL." (THOUGH HE PROBABLY DID NOT ORIGINATE THAT PHRASE) IT IS TRUE... THERE IS HARDSHIP AND SUFFERING ALL AROUND US. A WELL KNOWN ENGINEER WROTE: "Nature in the raw is *cruel, capricious, destructive and unfeeling* as well as beautiful and bountiful."

DEER, FOR INSTANCE, STAND IN FEAR OF MAN... AND MAN STANDS IN FEAR OF DEER. I HEARD OF TWO CARS MEETING ON A RURAL HIGHWAY. A DEER RAN IN FRONT OF THE FIRST CAR, AND UPON BEING STRUCK, THE DEER WENT AIRBORNE AND CRASHED THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD OF THE SECOND VEHICLE. THE FIRST CAR WENT OUT OF CONTROL, LEFT THE ROADWAY AND CRASHED, KILLING ITS TWO OCCUPANTS. THE DEER, CRASHING THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD, KILLED THE DRIVER OF THE OTHER CAR. AND THE DEER WAS KILLED, TOO.

SOME PEOPLE HAVE A "FAITH PROBLEM" WITH THINGS LIKE THESE. "IF THERE IS A LOVING GOD WHO IS IN CONTROL OF THE UNIVERSE," THEY REASON, "WHY DOES HE LET SUCH THINGS HAPPEN... AND THE MYRIAD OF OTHER THINGS THAT MAKE LIFE SO MISERABLE FOR SO MANY PEOPLE? --ACCIDENTS, SICKNESS, STORMS, FIRES, CALAMITIES. WHAT THEY FAIL TO REALIZE IS THAT GOD DIDN'T MAKE IT THAT WAY! BEHOLD, EVERY THING WAS VERY GOOD, WHEN GOD MADE IT. WE LIVE IN A FALLEN WORLD! SOLOMON SAID, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." (Eccl 7:29 )

ONLY THREE CHAPTERS IN THE BIBLE AFTER WE READ OF THE PARADISE, WE ARE TOLD, IN GEN. 6: "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; *for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.* And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." (Gen 6:11 - 13) THAT IS WHEN GOD DETERMINED TO SEND THE FLOOD... HE SAID, IN VERSE 17, " And, behold, I,

even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy ***all flesh, wherein is the breath of life***, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.."

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE SOME WHO WOULD DISAGREE WITH ME ON THIS, I BELIEVE WHEN HE SAID "**ALL FLESH**" HE MEANT ANIMAL LIFE AS WELL AS HUMANITY HAD CORRUPTED HIS WAY.

WHAT WAS USED FOR FOOD IN THE BEGINNING? MAN DID NOT EAT FLESH, AND NEITHER DID THE ANIMALS! IN GEN. 1:29, 30 (JUST BEFORE PRONOUNCING EVERYTHING VERY GOOD): "God said, Behold, I have given you every ***herb*** (meaning ***plant***) bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the ***fruit*** of a tree yielding seed; ***to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.***"

WHEN DID PEOPLE START TO BE CARNIVORES? IT STARTED WHEN NOAH AND THE ANIMALS EXITED THE ARK IN GENESIS 9. They "went forth out of the ark. And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more ***every thing living***, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. ***Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.***"

***"BUT,"*** SOMEONE SAYS, ***"I THOUGHT JESUS CAME TO SET THINGS RIGHT AND GET US OUT OF THIS MESS!"***

INDEED HE DID... BUT IT IS ***A WORK IN PROGRESS, AND IT IS NOT FINISHED YET.***

**PAUL WINDS DOWN THE BOOK OF ROMANS, SAYING: Rom 16:20 "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."**

JESUS SAID, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) NOW IS THE TIME OF TESTING... BUT JESUS PROMISES, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Rev 2:7) --SOUNDS LIKE PARADISE RESTORED, DOESN'T IT? --INDEED IT IS!

IN ACTS CHAPTER 3, PETER SPEAKS OF THE TIME WHEN PARADISE WILL BE RESTORED... NOTICE CAREFULLY: "But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, ***when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the***

**Lord;** And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: ***Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things***, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:18--21)

SO, PETER SAYS JESUS IS IN HEAVEN, AND **RESTITUTION WON'T HAPPEN UNTIL HE COMES BACK!**

**PAUL EXPLAINS TO THE CORINTHIANS:** "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so ***in Christ*** shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's ***at his coming***. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; ***when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.***" (1Co 15:21 - 26) -AND, OF COURSE, SUFFERING AND HARDSHIP WON'T END UNTIL THE ENEMY **DEATH** HAS BEEN DESTROYED! HE THEN ADDS: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on ***incorruption***, and this mortal shall have put on ***immortality***, **then** shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 15:51--57)

**THERE ARE SEVERAL PASSAGES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT WHICH SEEM TO SIGNIFY RESTORATION OF THE PARADISE THAT WAS LOST!**

**Isa 2:2** And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. **3** And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. **4** And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

**Isa 11:1** "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." --THAT'S JESUS!

**Isa 11:5** And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. **6** The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. **7** And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion

shall eat straw like the ox. 8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Isa 65:17 "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. 18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. 19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. 20 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. 21 And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. 22 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. 24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD."

SOMETIMES IT IS HARD FOR US TO KEEP UP HOPE IN ALL THE HARSHIPS THAT WE ENDURE. But Jas 5:11 ssays, "Behold, we count them happy which endure."

TIME SEEMS SO LONG FOR US, BUT IT IS DIFFERENT WITH THE LORD. PETER SAYS ONE DAY IS AS A THOUSAND YEARS WITH THE LORD, AND A THOUSAND YEARS AS ONE DAY ... THE LORD IS NOT SLACK CONCERNING HIS PROMISE, (2 Pet. 3:8,9). In Luke 19:11 beginning, Jesus spake a parable, the Bible says, ***because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.*** 12 He said therefore, ***A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.*** Mt 25:19 says, "***After a long time*** the lord of those servants cometh..."

PAUL SAID, "***in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.***" Gal. 6:9)

PETER SAYS, 1Pe 4:12 "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." "HE GOES ON TO SAY, 1Pe 4:19 "Wherefore let them that ***suffer*** according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

IN THE REVELATION, JOHN SAW A GLIMPSE OF "***PARADISE RESTORED.***" Rev. 21:1 "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of

heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 4 **And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.** (HALLELUJAH TIME, RIGHT?) 5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

HE WENT ON TO MENTION THE TREE OF LIFE, WHICH MAN FORFEITED IN THE BEGINNING: Rev. 22:1 "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there **the tree of life**, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 **And there shall be no more curse:** but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. 5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

SO THIS IS WHY THE APOSTLE PAUL COULD GIVE US THESE ENCOURAGING WORDS IN Rom. 8:18-ff "For I reckon (**consider**) that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the **glory** which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creature **waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.** 20 For the creature (created being) was made subject to vanity, **not willingly**, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, 21 Because the creature itself also shall **be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.** 22 For we know that the whole creation (*the big, the little, the human and animal*) groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only they, but **ourselves** also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, (even Christians, even Apostles) even **we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.** 24 For we are saved by **hope:** but hope that is seen (*or, realized*) is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. 8:18-24)

JESUS SAYS, John 16:21 "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. 22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: **but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."**

SO, WHEN IT HURTS, HANG IN THERE AND DON'T LOSE HOPE. KEEP YOUR FAITH, AND WHEN WE COME OUT ON THE OTHER SIDE, IT WON'T SEEM TO HAVE BEEN ALL THAT BAD. Heb 12:2 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the **joy** that was set before him **endured the cross**, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 **For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."**