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...to know the love of Christ
which passeth knowledge
that ye might be filled with
all the fulness of God Eph 3:19

Paradise

Though saints may sing, "When we all get to heaven," some may be surprised when they awake from the grave and find themselves on earth in the realm of "Paradise". Scripture does not teach that heaven is the hope of all God's people. We find that many saints will rise from the grave to live on the earth when it is renewed. Scripture tells us that the earth will be cleansed from sin and death one day and will be made a Paradise for some saints among whom God will dwell. This is in direct contrast to what we have come to believe through the traditions taught by men; including those written in hymns, but we must put our trust in the words of God rather than those of men.

In this three-part portion on "Paradise", we will compare what Scripture reveals about Paradise to what men teach concerning it, giving particular attention to Christ's words on the cross concerning Paradise. Lastly, we will consider some people in Scripture whose hope is Paradise.

Scripture reveals that the first Paradise God created was in His primal creation. It was a literal place where the "anointed cherub" (Lucifer) served God until his sin. God said to Lucifer, "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God." (Ezek. 28:13)

That first Paradise was lost when the earth became waste and void, but God reconstructed the earth and prepared a new Paradise for Adam. Genesis 2:8, tells us, "And God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed."

The Hopes Of God # 12

The word that is rendered "garden" here is "paradiesos", the stem of our word "paradise." It occurs in the LXX (Greek Old Testament) 28 times and is always used of a beautiful earthly place of pleasures. It occurs three times in the Greek New Testament and is rendered "paradise." "Paradiesos", as used by the Greeks, referred to a walled park of forests and pleasures made for kings. We read in Ecclesiastes 2:5, that King Solomon said, "I made me gardens" ("paradiesos"), lush parklands.

Therefore we understand the garden God planted on earth for Adam was not a small garden, but rather a beautiful parkland. It was in Eden, a country, in a geographical location. Eden was a point of reference in Genesis 4:16, where we read, "Cain...dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden." (Gen. 4:16)

Because Paradise was in the country of Eden, Scripture uses the word "Eden" interchangeably with Paradise. Isaiah said that one day in the future the land of Israel would be, "... like Eden, and her desert like the garden (paradise) of the Lord." (Isa. 51:3) Isaiah spoke these words six hundred years after Adam's Paradise was lost to man. Thus we see that throughout the ages men passed on the memory of Paradise and its delights.

In the Paradise God prepared for man there were pleasures to see and taste. There was a tree of life and of knowledge (perception), and a river of life giving water. It was there that God walked and talked with man.

That Paradise was lost to man when Adam sinned and God drove him out into a cursed land with briars and thistles.

We read, "God sent him (Adam) forth from the garden (paradiesos) of Eden...So He drove out the man." (Gen. 3:23,24) God then placed angelic guards at the entrance to Paradise to prevent man's access to the tree of life lest eating of it he would live forever in sin and decay.

Adam's Paradise was lost to man, but in the future God will make a new and perfect Paradise where certain of His children will dwell. Christ promised the malefactor on the cross a place in that Paradise. The malefactor obviously understood this promise since Christ did not deem it necessary to explain it. Here again is evidence that the knowledge of Paradise and its pleasures must have continued in the traditions of men throughout the ages.

Later, in the years of the Acts, some in the church at Ephesus were promised the reward of resurrection to see the Land of Israel become like Paradise. (Rev. 2:7) They will rise when Christ returns to earth to reign and conditions in the Land of Israel are like Paradise. Isaiah foretold this saying that their Land would be like Eden in that day.

After Christ reigns on earth for 1000 years, and after all enemies are destroyed, the whole earth will be renewed and made a Paradise. In the ages that follow, God will dwell with certain of His children there. The Apostle John saw the future Paradise in a vision. He saw the earth renewed and cleansed from its curse. There was no more death, and like Adam's Paradise, the river of life was there. (Rev. 22) The

...cont'd. on page 4

The Peace Of God And The God Of Peace #1

The Fundamental Meaning Of Peace

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding....Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her." (Pro 3:14,17,18)

When we think of peace we generally think of it in terms of relationships between nations and often in the context of war. Many treaties made between nations come far short of the meaning of peace as time exposes the differences between cultures. History continues to reveal that man's attempts to bring peace in the world is unachievable.

The Scriptures express peace in a way foreign to the mind of the unbeliever and the old nature. True peace is only available in the person of the Lord Christ Jesus. To appreciate the Scriptural meaning of the word peace, it is of great value to look at the various translations into English. Beginning in the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for peace is *shalom*. The adjective is *shalem* and the verb is *shalam*.

In Gen 15:16 we read "**... the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full** (*shalem*). The word full is the word peace and indicates something was not yet complete or ready for the Abram's seed. The Lord made a covenant with Abram when he was childless while he was in a deep sleep. He was told that his seed would be a stranger in a land (Egypt) that was not theirs and they would serve and be afflicted for four hundred years. But the Lord promised that they would return unto their promised land after the fourth generation and He would allow the iniquity of the Amorites to run its course.

A study of the Amorites and their connection with the fallen angelic seedline will help us understand the meaning of peace. When our study leads us into our present dispensation, we will see the connection of peace with the principalities, powers, dominions and might mentioned in Ephesians and Colossians.

In 1Ki 9 we read of some the things accomplished during Solomon's reign

and the completion of the house of the Lord. In 1Ki 9:1 we read, "**And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished** (Heb.= *kalah*) **the building of the house of the LORD...**" and in verse 25, "**And three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto the LORD, and he burnt incense upon the altar that was before the LORD. So he finished** (*shalam*) **the house.**" In these two verse we see the English word finished is represented by two different Hebrew words. In verse 1, the Hebrew word *kalah* is used. It means to finish, accomplish or end. In verse 25 the Hebrew word *shalam* or "peace" is used. When Solomon honored the Lord's word and worshipped Him according to the law in the house he had built, the finished work was peace (*shalam*). The house of the Lord was finished but peace was the result of righteousness. The "brick and mortar" had been completed, but peace was a result of acknowledging what the house represented and by worshipping therein.

So peace includes the idea of completing or settling something. Yet we see another principal in this verse associated with peace. Peace is a result of righteousness and therefore in 1Ki 9:25, the word *shalam* was used. This thought is emphasized in Isa 32:17, "**And the work of righteousness shall be peace** (*shalom*); **and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.**" Although this was a promise to Israel, we will find that real peace is available to all believers who walk in righteousness.

Real peace is a result of the finished work of the Lord Christ Jesus. What was accomplished on the cross and in resurrection made peace possible. Sin and death have been defeated. Sin and death stand in the way of peace, even in the life of believers. When we consider the idea of peace in Paul's prison epistles and his ministry concerning the revelation of the mystery, we will see peace in its fullest meaning. The church which is His body has an exclusive relationship with principalities, powers, dominions and might. What Christ accomplished at the cross, in His resurrection and

ascending on high opened the door for a fuller peace. "**...that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;**" (Heb 2:14) Now that "the mystery" has been made known through Paul not only to mankind but also to principalities and powers, we begin to appreciate the manifold wisdom of God being revealed to those beings (Eph 3:10) and also understand the warfare with principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age and spiritual wickedness (Eph 6:12). In this contest, we will see the meaning of peace in relationship to the church which is His body. Furthermore, in our daily walk, when we acknowledge the things that Christ has accomplished, we will enjoy peace in our lives here on earth.

In Ex. 22:1-15, the word *shalam* is used 14 times and translated "make good", "restore", "restitution", "pay for". The context addresses the obligation to restore or repair the damage one had done to his neighbor and thereby making peace. The law was given as a necessary way of life to help understand the real meaning of peace. In the overall picture of peace, a price had to be paid by an innocent Christ, the "**Lamb slain from the foundation of the world**" for restoration, restitution and ultimately peace. In its fullest context, we will see that peace is associated with reconciliation.

Other examples include Prov 11:1, "**A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just** (*shalem*) **weight is His delight.**" Here we see the connection with righteousness and peace. And in Deut. 25:15, "**But thou shalt have a perfect** (*shalem*) **and just weight, a perfect** (*shalem*) **and just measure shalt thou have: ...**" The word "perfect" also includes the idea of finishing. This can be seen in the Greek word *teleios*, in the New Testament, translated perfect.

These translations of the word peace can only help us appreciate more the finished work of our Lord Christ Jesus and His faithfulness. The ultimate meaning of peace will be discovered in Paul's prison epistles, letters written to fullness of the Lord Christ Jesus.

B. Bagby

God Requireth That Which Is Past # 3

What is the past that God seeks? What is His goal in the ages? 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 sheds some light on His desire and plan. After writing about the resurrection of saints, the Apostle Paul said,

“Then cometh the end, when He (Christ) 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 (Christ) must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” (1 Cor. 15:24-26)

From this Scripture we understand that a time will come when all things in every place, sin, death and every enemy of God will be destroyed by the work of Christ, the Son. At that point Christ, having completed His work of Savior-Redeemer, will hand over all dominion to God, “the Father.”

The title “Father” expresses the relationship of one with his children; it denotes the one who has begotten them. It is the name by which the Son of God addressed God, and it is the name by which we are privileged to address Him.

It is the title used of God when at last all enemies are destroyed.

When all enemies are destroyed, then God the Father will be *over* all and He will also be *among* all in every place. We read, **“For He (God) hath put all things under His (Christ’s) feet. But when He saith all things are put under Him (Christ), it is manifest that He (God) is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in (among) all.”** (1 Cor. 15:27-28)

Having completed the work of redeeming the world through Christ His Son, then God will have reached His goal in the ages. Righteousness will fill heaven and earth and there will be no more need of a Savior, God will manifest Himself as the Heavenly Father Who dwells with His families. God, Who *is* Love, will have the desire of His heart; He will be with the objects of His love.

Throughout Scripture we see God’s constant desire to be with His children. We see this in His fellowship with Adam,

His walk with Enoch, and His efforts to be among those of Israel.

In picture and type, God showed Israel He desired to dwell among them, but that they must put away sin before that was possible. He gave them detailed instructions for building a tabernacle and for its services, all to the end that they might approach Him without sin. He told Moses, **“And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.”** (Ex. 25:8) In the past, Israel has refused to repent of sin, but they will repent in the future. Then God will dwell in Mount Zion on earth and, with some of Israel, He will rule over the nations. Of that time we read, **“Why leap ye, ye high hills? This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; Yea, the LORD will dwell in it for ever.”** (Ps. 68:16)

After that, when there is a new heaven and earth that is filled with righteousness, God will dwell among those whose hope was a heavenly city and among those whose hope was Paradise. The Apostle John wrote, **“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 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.”** (Revelation 21:2,3)

Thus far we have spoken of God’s dwelling among His People in the Land of Israel when sin is put away and of His dwelling in the new heavens and earth that He will create. We have not considered His dwelling far above all heavens with a family. We have not mentioned the Father’s plan to have the assembly called the “Body of Christ” dwell with Him and with the rulers of angels in the realm that is outside all heavens. We learn of this plan in the Apostle Paul’s prison epistles that are some of the last epistles written in our Bible. In these letters Paul reveals the Father’s plan for this family to be at home with Him in heavenly places. They reveal that the Father made this plan before sin entered His world, but He kept the plan secret until He revealed it to the Apostle Paul for us Gentiles.

In summary, we have found that when all sin and death are gone, God will have that which He sought. Righteousness will fill the world and He will dwell as a Father among His families. But, is that the end of the story? How long will this relationship last? Is it for a time or for eternity?

We cannot say what will be in eternity for Scripture does not reveal eternity, but it does speak of “ages” and tells us some things about the ages. It speaks of ages past, the present age, and ages yet to come. Jesus spoke of “... **this world (age),**” and **“the world (age) to come.”** (Mt. 12: 32) We, members of the Body of Christ are told that we are raised and seated together with Christ in heavenly places, **“That in the ages to come He (the Father) might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”** (Eph. 2: 7)

We find there are ages to come, but Scripture does not speak of “eternity” in the sense of the present English word. It tells us nothing about what was before the ages began or what will be after the ages end. The Bible tells only of the ages, which are a little slice out of eternity. The ages are like the “pause” that occurs when we press the button on our video remote control in the midst of a program. The ages began in the midst of eternity and they will end as eternity continues.

“God requireth that which is past,” He seeks a righteous world and He will be satisfied only when that is fully restored. We too will be satisfied then, for we shall be with our heavenly Father for the ages to come and we may learn His plan for “eternity.” Until then, let us say with King David, **“I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness.”** (Ps. 17:15) Until then, let us say with Paul, **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”** (Eph. 1:3) Until then, let us honor our heavenly Father and say with Paul, **“Now unto God and our Father, be glory for ever and ever.”** (To the ages of the ages) (Philippians 4:20)

J. Heltzinger

Hopes # 12 ...cont'd

Apostle Paul referred to that vision when he wrote that a man he knew had been caught away into the future to see Paradise. (2 Cor. 12:2-4)

The Paradise God made for Adam cannot be found today because the great flood in Noah's day changed the surface of the earth. In the future, God will restore Paradise for those to whom it is promised.

In summary, we see in Scripture that:

1. Paradise was a real geographic area that existed on earth in the past.
2. Lucifer was in the first Paradise of God that was ruined when the earth became waste and void.
3. Adam was placed in a second Paradise God prepared when He remade the earth.
4. Adam's Paradise was lost to man when Adam sinned, but men remembered it longingly thereafter.
5. The Land of Israel will become like Paradise when Christ returns, and afterwards, the whole earth will be made a Paradise.

Now let us compare this to what some men and traditions teach about Paradise.

1. Some teach that Paradise is not

future but exists now.

2. Some call it "Abraham's bosom," or "the intermediate state" of the blessed dead who wait their final end.

3. Some incorporate the Greek's belief of "Elysium," a place of pleasures across a deep gulf from a place of torments. (hell)

4. To some, Paradise is the opposite of "Purgatory"

5. Some teach that Christ said it could be entered immediately at death.

6. Some say the spirits of dead people wait there to receive their bodies at resurrection day.

By comparing the teachings and traditions of men to the teachings and revelations of God's Word in Scripture, we can have confidence in choosing what we believe.

In the next paper we will continue our study of Paradise by considering Christ's words to the malefactor on the cross, words that have led to the belief that Paradise exists now and can be entered at death. In the concluding article we will look at some believers whose hope is Paradise.

J. Heltzinger

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The 7 Occurrences of The Word "Walk" In Ephesians

2:2 "Wherein in time past ye *walked* according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"

2:10 "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should *walk* in them."

4:1 "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye *walk* worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,"

4:17 "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth *walk* not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,"

5:2 "And *walk* in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."

5:8 "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: *walk* as children of light:"

5:15 "See then that ye *walk* circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,"

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