

THE PATHFINDER

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INTO DEATH AND HELL

"...Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2:27). "While He yet spake...a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, **this is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.**" *Matthew 17:5.*

When we consider Jesus being transfigured upon *Mount Hermon*, there is little wonder why God gave that commanding word — **"HEAR YE HIM"** — for it was upon that mountain where we see that He symbolized the overthrow of Adam's kingdom. It was upon that mountain that symbolized the climax of a journey that began and ended in Adam's death but ultimately came to be ***OVERFLOWING GOD-LIFE unto RESURRECTION!***

Jesus began His mission of conquering death when He was lifted from the Jordan River, which was near the mouth of the Dead Sea to where all of dying humanity has symbolically been flowing since man's fall. He demonstrated His dominion over that death from its end to its beginning; that is, from Mount Hermon (the manger) where the river is birthed to the Dead Sea (the cross) where it comes to a certain end and dies. His transfiguration signaled, first, the destiny of His corporate Body, then, the rest of humanity. From the wooden manger to the wooden cross. He had gone to hell and back,

and His resurrection declared His victory over every vestige of that lifeless realm.

We see Jesus ascending from the lowest hell to the highest heaven and destroying every particle of death in the process — and from deep within we sense the approaching hour of the same victory. As the trumpet sounds, all the vessels of His choosing will likewise break forth into glistering transfiguration.

Yes indeed, "Hear ye Him," and this is for a good reason. There is no other avenue to the Transfiguring Life. Jesus Himself said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that **heareth My Word...hath everlasting life**, and shall not come into condemnation; but **is passed from death unto life....**I say unto you, The hour is coming, **and now is**, when the dead shall **hear the voice of the Son of God**: and **they that hear shall live."** **John 5:24-25.**

Please note, Jesus **did not say that those who hear sermons wherein scriptures are quoted will someday have everlasting life.** He said, **He that HEARS My WORD HAS LIFE.** His Word is LIFE as it is sounded from the throne! It is, vibrant, anointed, and very alive! One person can be anointed and quote a verse, and it will be the WORD OF GOD, while another may quote it without the anointing, and it will be the letter that kills. However, if those who hear it by the Spirit, it is the WORD OF GOD, and when it is heard — they live. It is akin to a match being stuck and touching the dry, dead wick of a candle. It immediately takes on the same nature as the flaming match — fire! It doesn't have to wait a thousand or two years to live, but rather, it is at that moment when it hears, or is touch by the flaming word of our Lord. Do you hear what is being said here?

Let me say that I can testify to the fact that when one truly **hears His word**, they are awakened, they immediately receive life and begin to live. More than 50 years ago I read a verse from the Bible and the words therein

were quickened by the Holy Spirit, and **I HEARD** those words by the Spirit. I did not just read and understand them by my intellect – **I HEARD THEM DEEP WITHIN! AND I LIVED! I HEARD AND I LIVED!** At that moment I began to live God's *everlasting* life, and praise God, since then, nothing has ever been the same! Whether rain or shine, good times or bad — **ALL HAS BEEN VERY WELL and VERY ALIVE!!!**

Sadly, most Bible believers have no idea what "*everlasting*" life is. I didn't at that time, nor for quite sometime afterwards. Frankly, it is more than the concept of living *forever* next door to Jesus while strumming harps and singing hymns. The average person has a hard time holding out through twenty minutes of such singing. It makes one wonder how they could do it throughout eternity, and still believe such to be heaven.

Simply put, *everlasting* (*aionion*) *life* is *the life of the ages*, as well as *agelasting life*. *It is the highest form of life to be found in all the ages. It is the enduring, inseparable Life of Christ Jesus in His people.* And since it is always progressing, His life is *agelasting* in the sense that as it matures and changes to a higher life, it enters another age for the man and/or the body of Christ. The life does not end, but changes as it advances to a higher stage and age.

But let us look a little more closely what the *Word of God* is and is not. Of course, we are aware that it is common for most believers to embrace the Bible is the word of God, even though Paul said *the letter kills*. And Jesus said, you "**Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me [the living Word].** And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." **John 5:39-40**.

Please, we must know that *the Word of God* **is not** that which is printed with black or red ink upon the pages of the great book known as *the Bible*.

In brief, His *Word* is *the living, vibrant, the substantial reality of Christ*

Himself. It is His Spirit and His Word coming together forming His Voice, a Voice that conveys and manifests the personification of Himself. Such is His Word, not historical accounts of what He did and said. His Word is not what is printed in books or bibles, even so, it can certainly be heard in them when quickened by the Spirit.

His *Word* is His substance, the very essence of His being. It is that which is expressed or spoken by the Spirit. It is that which is heard by the Spirit, that which is seen by the Spirit, that which is felt by the Spirit, that which is taken within by the Spirit, that which is eaten by the Spirit, that which is consumed by the Spirit, that which raises the dead by the Spirit, and that which gives strength and hope to the despondent by the Spirit. This is what His *Word* is: **GOD BEING MADE FLESH IN AND OUT FROM US — BY THE SPIRIT!**

Generally speaking, you can't get Living substance from carefully prepared sermons of intellectual minds, or from systematically studying the scriptures. Yet, the Spirit can very well break forth from those sermons, scriptures, preachers, and/or the people; therewith, to become the living Word of God. Sadly, those words and sermons are very often only *knowledge that puffs up* religious minds as Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 8:1**.

God's Word comes from on high, from the Spirit of Christ that dwells within the heavens of one's own being. Men of their own will cannot do it, whether by speaking it, orchestrating it, contrive it, or any other *it*, this comes only from and by the Spirit. Such, of course, can confuse and infuriate the doctoral minds of the Pharisees. They don't believe it or like it at all; but all their unbelief and bitter hatred failed to stop the Word from finishing His course back then and will also fail today.

Strangely, however, their efforts to stop Him, even unto to crucifixion, were instrumental in Him finishing His course and insuring that God's word

and will would be accomplished. They could not stop nor slow it then, and nothing has changed to this day!

This verse stands solid and true:

"So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." ***Isaiah 55:11***.

Isn't it wonderful to know that not only the Word, especially Jesus Himself, was sent and will accomplish that which pleases God, and also that we as His word have also been sent and will not return to him void of our commission.

Even so, we might question, why don't we see the results of an outward manifestation of His life, such as a transfiguration? Or why is it taking so long? Namely, it is a process, brethren, and it cannot be hurried. We cannot rush it any more than the 120 could rush the appearing of Jesus coming like a mighty, rushing wind in the form of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost — and it took God 4000 years of building up to that one event, and they had to wait for it. But when the hour came no one could stop it, and likewise it shall be with the appearing of the Sons of God to the groaning creation.

One thing is for certain, as mentioned earlier, all the unbelief in the world cannot hinder or stop the intent of God's word no more than it could prevent the resurrection of His Son, and likewise with the manifestation of the sons of God! These lively stones that will be brought together to reveal Him in all His glory. They will come together as one body to make all mankind and all creation free from the bondage that causes corruption and death. Freedom from the curse of death is the promise to all living!

Some may be saddened that we cannot speed it up; but let us rejoice that neither can we slow it down as our Forerunner works it so gloriously in us. Some may assume that the evils of Socialist Marxism in our nation and the

world can hinder the Word of God and His predestined purpose, but not so. Not one iota!

It is not understood by everyone that the overcoming life of Jesus was for more than Himself alone. And His marvelous exploits were not to serve the purpose of exciting our flesh. His journey was set as an example for our journey. He is our example and the shining Light for us to follow. From His birth to the resurrection was a forecast of what is in store for those who are *the first ones called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28)*. He was the pattern for many Sons, the sample, the prototype, the foretaste of Life's delight unto creation.

If this is so, and it is, let us take note of some of those things which light our path unto that high calling of God's purpose. Let us see what is in store for the molding of our own lives unto glory.

The Spirit of life that was found in Jesus from the moment of His conception is the same Spirit that is in you and me. It is not just a spirit that is similar to His Spirit — **it is His Spirit!** It is the same Spirit that raised Him from the dead; and if it had the power then, it has the power today to quicken our mortal bodies and raise us from the dead. It cannot and will not fail. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." **Roman 8:11**.

People can be convinced of this fairly easily when it is projected into the distant future of another age (after their graveyard experience), but it is not such an easy matter for them to grasp and believe for the present. With this being true, let us ask our Father to open His Spirit of understanding to all who are called according to His purpose in this hour, to see beyond the heavy veil of carnal reasoning, and lay hold of that glory that is found only in the Spirit of His Son Jesus.

In this article we will notice very briefly the journey of Jesus, all the way from His initial death in the womb to when it was totally swallowed up in Life by His resurrection. We will then see that His footsteps have marked His course in the soil of our own earth. If so, we can know that we have also been called to the same glory by which He overcame death and hell.

INTO HELL

"Now that He ascended, what is it but that **He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?** He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, **that HE MIGHT FILL ALL THINGS.**" *Ephesians 4:9-10.*

Into what extremes of death, do we suppose, Jesus was lowered when He was clothed upon with humanity's form? Most view His coming into the earth as the beginning of His life, not realizing it was the beginning of His death. He died the moment of His conception in the *tomb* of Mary. We say "*tomb*" in the sense that the glory He descended from with the Father before the world was can be likened to *a tomb, the grave, even hell (imperceptible, unseen)*. ***Hell, as we recall, is the imperceptible realm of death, and should not be mistaken as being the lake of fire wherein hell is cast.*** (*Please, never forget this!*)

Death is simply a state of being that is void of life, like the flame of a candle when it no longer burns. While the wick is burning, it is clothed upon with the glory of light and fire; but once it begins to diminish, it is said that the flame is dying, and when it goes completely out — it is dead. There is no more light nor heat in it. There is no more glory. Like a moldering body in the grave — it is dead.

Before Jesus came into the earth He was clothed upon with glory; but at the moment He was housed in earthen clay that glory ceased, for a season. He spoke of this when He said, "And now, O Father, **glorify Thou Me**

with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." John 17:5.

His own words testified that He left the glory He had in His Father and was lowered into death and hell. He came to be in the same place wherein He spoke concerning the man who wanted to follow Him, but only after he buried his father. Jesus said, "Let the dead bury the dead," indicating, of course, the ones who would be burying his father were just as dead as the corpse they would be placing into the grave.

To be reminded, *hell* is translated from the Greek word, *hades*, and simply means *an unseen, imperceptible realm*. The *womb* of Mary was exactly that, *an imperceptible place* wherein all of humanity is ushered as they come into the world. It is a dark place which *conceals* the seed for a time. This is where Jesus was lowered to, and from there He began His perilous journey back to the Life and glory He once had with His Father.

Hell, as it is used in the Bible, is the place of the dead, but the meaning of the word does not always denote death or torment. To borrow a thought or two from one of our previous articles: a common term for burying potatoes in the side of a hill to preserve them through the winter is called, "***helling the potatoes***." In Ireland when roofers are putting shingles on the roof, the process is referred to as ***helling the roof***."

You see, the *roof is placed in hell*; and incidentally, when this happens, not one flame of fire is applied to it. Also, when a young man is ready to take his girlfriend into a secluded place we might hear him say, "***Tonight, I'll be takin' my girlfriend into hell***." And upon returning from that *imperceptible realm* he would say with a smile upon his face, "***I've been to hell and back with my sweet lassie***." And doubtless to say, he would by no means be implying that he had taken her into a place of torment.

The word *hell* in the Bible speaks of a realm that we cannot see or perceive from this side of the veil. Of course, torment can be a very real part of it, for it is common for the *secluded, hidden realm* of the carnal mind to be in torment. The darkened souls of most of humanity are in torment to one degree or another; but it is not so with everyone. For instance, some are totally void of Christ; but they are perfectly content in their dark place. It seems that the Pharisees were good examples of this point.

Nevertheless, knowing what death is, we can see that Jesus was lowered into *hell* at the moment of His conception within the confines of Mary's *womb*. He entered an *obscure, imperceptible realm of death*. He was placed in an *earthen tomb, the grave-clothes of death — the womb of the woman*. His glory was no longer apparent. That which He had with His heavenly Father before the world vanished for a season. It was replaced with the heavy shroud of earth, the same flesh as with Adam. He started on the same grounds as the first Adam, but His Spirit, unlike the first man, was one that had the ability to overcome the desires of the flesh and carnal mind. He was not from the earth, earthy, but from the heavens, heavenly.

He was birthed into another grave, which was the stable in Bethlehem among the beasts of the field, and was wrapped in the swaddling clothes of death. (*Swaddling clothes are grave-clothes.*) He was laid in the manger, the feed-trough for the animals; and let us recall the words He spoke sometime later: "I am the Bread of Life...Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, **hath** eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." **John 6:48, 53-54.**

What a beautiful foreshadow of humanity's destiny — to eat no longer that which is of the earth and continue in death, but to eat of His substance and live. Thus, symbolically, from the manger in which He was laid.

He had a physical form after His birth; but He was not perceived on a

large scale as *the Son of God*. To the natural eye, He was still wrapped in *death* and was not truly seen until He escaped every vestige of Adam's grave some thirty-three years later. Prior to His glorification He was recognized for who He really was only on a few occasions, which was by Simeon Peter, a sinful woman of the city, and the demoniac in the Gadarenes), but to the masses, He remained imperceptible. He remained in *the imperceptible realm of hell, not torment, just hidden from the world's view*, and it is the same with the rest of His body.

We are not seen as the sons of God; for it is in the same manner it was with the confinement of His own Spirit in the grave of His body. In one fashion, He is still in the same grave today, which is in our flesh of His many membered body, which generally clothes and conceals Him.

For the most part, Jesus was in the grave of His Adamic body for thirty-three plus years, even as He has been in the confines of our bodies since then. But please remember, He rose from the Jordan river which signified His victory over death and the grave. This was a declaration that He had led captivity captive, and He would continue on from there until it was complete in the resurrection. Furthermore, we can be assured He will do the same in us; for as it was with Him in His single body, so shall it be in His Body of many members. With confidence we can echo the words of the Psalmist: "*You will not leave ours souls in hell, neither will You suffer your anointed ones to see corruption.*" **Psalms 16:9-11** (paraphrased).

After His baptism that signified Jesus' victory over death, He was immediately lead into the wilderness for forty days of testing and proving His victory over the oracles of death; namely, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. It was therein He triumphed over the desires of His own flesh, and now ours as He leads death into the captivity of Life.

For the last three and half years of His journey in the world, and as it had been previously, Jesus had rarely been seen for who He really was. During that short period He manifested that which His rising from the Jordan signified. And of course, He finally went into the literal lower parts of the earth as He was laid in Joseph of Arimathaea's sepulcher for three days and

nights. From there He triumphed over death and hell completely, and again, leading captivity captive.

Coming into the world, He was *concealed* in a *tomb/womb*. He, like all others having the form of Adam, fulfilled the letter that declares, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the *judgment." **Hebrews 9:27**. His appointment to death did not come only at the cross, but at the instant He was conceived in the *unseen confines* of His mother's *womb*. The cross was only the culmination of that initial death. It was not its beginning.

***Judgment:** Greek *Krisis*, from which we have the English, *crisis*, meaning a *turning point, a change*.

He was compassed about by death, and the remainder of His journey was the same. Everywhere He went was in the realm of death on behalf of the majority's perception; but upon each step He took was placed the imprint of Life, marking the beginning of its end forever. He was seen captivating everything from the beginning to the end, leaving nothing behind.

Everything that Adam had brought death to, Jesus brought life, and He continues to bring it. Adam may have walked to and fro throughout your earth, sowing death in every crack and crevice — but Jesus is walking the same avenues and digging up and bringing an end to every one of those contrary plantings. "...Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." **Matthew 15:13**.

In a panoramic view of this triumph over man's primordial enemy, we see Jesus journeying back to the head of death itself. His journey began in the confines of the earthen tomb of Adam, then down to Egypt, and on to the lower realm of death. We see this being signified by His baptism in the Jordan river, which was near the mouth of the Dead Sea, at the dregs of death itself, at the end of all things that has proceeded from Adam.

After Jesus had been tested and proven in the wilderness, He traveled on to **Galilee**, which in the Greek means, **Circuit of the Gentiles**. Symbolically, humanity is found here before it passes on and is deposited

as refuse into the Dead Sea. His steps then led to the top of Mount Hermon, the Mount of Transfiguration, the birth place of the Jordan river, the kingdom of man from whence all death comes.

From below sea level at *the sea of death*, across *the sea of the Gentiles* to the *tombs of Gadara*, to the height of *man's bastion of death* (the top of *Mount Hermon*) shall death be destroyed from His jewels. This victory is working in us. He has descended down to the very rudiments of our death, and is destroying it all. He does this by leading us captive by the glorious Life of Himself.

Once He has finished this inner work it will then be seen outwardly in all the earth. We, along with creation, will see it together, and shall know it, for He shall not remain unseen forever in the unseen parts of bodies. He shall come forth after three days, and the prophetic words resounding down through the ages shall no longer be of promises to come, but will be a reality:

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction...." "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption...Death is swallowed up in victory." ***Hosea 13:14***. And then it can be said as Paul wrote in verse 54 of the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians:

"O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING? O GRAVE, WHERE IS THY VICTORY?"

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