

The Pathfinder

#340.22

Field of Dreams — Valley of Fires

(Part 2 of 2)

We closed our previous issue with Lisa H.'s heart breaking letter, and I cannot say that I held in my hands the power to free her when her letter came. Since I found myself back then in our own *valley of fires*, my response could only echo somewhat the same as this crushed soul. But praise God, I knew this flame of fire was not the end of our calling. Such was merely a small phase of our journey.

Neither was it in the sister nor myself to be overcome and wasted by the infamous destroyer. Instead, we were and still are called to overcome him as well as all of his minions, and we will do so, as I am sure will be the same with each of you, my dear friends! Darkness and those of that dark realm cannot abide when the light bearers shine, and they will shine, even if they/we do not see at the moment nor understand what God is doing in all the interplay of good and evil in the world and ourselves.

I know some of you would like to see me write on something more joyful, more delightful, more about us becoming the manifested sons of God, or something to that effect. Perhaps I will when something other than what is relevant for today is not standing in the forefront. Until then, we will embrace, endure, and seek to understand what is presently going on in the heavens and

reflected in our lives. For one it is war, and for another it is silence for the space of half an hour. We also desire to understand that which is being witnessed in our personal human earths as well as the nations in the world.

There is truly a fierce war being waged in the heavens, as we all are seeing it take place individually and worldwide, such as, the war in Ukraine and the Covid *plandemic*. What is going on is clearly of the finer mysteries that God is presently working in us and otherwise. We don't particularly enjoy it, but as the elect of God, we won't whine about it. We want this to be a perfect work and certainly do not want to come out of the valley's oven half-baked and good for nothing in His Kingdom.

Now, from our dear friend, J. Preston Eby, who has recently crossed over to the other side as most of you have heard. It is clear that he speaks to everyone who is part of the high calling. It was crucial when written and remains so to this day. The entire article is excellent; but only a portion will be shared:

"We would like to know what God is doing! We would like to pull aside the veil and see the end from the beginning! We would like to know the way that He is taking us, but if we did, and if we could see, we would not need faith to believe and accept GOD'S WAY. So Job, in the midst of all his deep afflictions, found comfort, not in the fact that he knew the reason and the answer for all of God's dealings with him, but he took encouragement in the truth that GOD KNEW WHAT HE WAS DOING! 'He knoweth the way that I take,' he said confidently, and then his faith leaped over every barrier, and as he looked into the distant future, he cried, 'When He hath

tried — tested and proved — me, I shall come forth as gold!' What a testimony, and truly it is ours too!

"Let me share with you a favorite story of mine. It clearly illustrates the sentiment of Job when he said, 'He knoweth the way that I take.' The story is centered around a Chinese man. This man had everything going for him. He had all the material things he needed. He had a beloved son, and prized horse. But one day his horse broke out of the corral and ran to the mountains. Since all his assets were tied up in this valuable horse, he lost in one brief, fleeting moment, all of his life's savings. All his neighbors, hearing that his horse was gone to the hills forever, came to offer their sympathy. They all said to him, 'Your horse is gone. Oh, what bad luck.' Then they cried and they tried to console and comfort him. But he said, 'How do you know it's bad luck?'

"Sure enough, a few days later, the horse, being well-domesticated, came back to where he could be sure there would be water and food. In the process he brought back twelve wild stallions with him. They were all quickly captured and ushered into the corral. Now when all the town heard the news, they came and they applauded and said, 'Oh, thirteen horses, what good luck!'

And the wise, old Chinese man said, 'How do you know it's good luck?' The townspeople remembered his words the next day when his son, his *only* child, tried to break one of the wild stallions. In the process, he was thrown off, he broke his leg and was left with a limp forever. When the neighbors heard about that, they came to him again and said, 'Your son,

forever a cripple. What bad luck.' But the wise, old man said, 'How do you know that's bad luck?'

"About a year later, a Chinese warlord came through town, conscripted every able-bodied young man, and took them off to battle. They lost the battle. In fact, every young warrior was killed. The only young man left in the village was the maimed son of the wise Chinese man, for he had never been conscripted, thanks to his limp. The moral of this story is that we do not know the way that God is taking us, or the 'why' of the happenings in our lives, seemingly good or bad, but OUR FATHER KNOWS THE WAY THAT WE TAKE AND THERE IS DIVINE PURPOSE IN ALL THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL IN OUR LIVES!

"The devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation *ten days*.' (**Rev. 2:10.**)

"Those 'ten days!' Let me explain to you what those ten days mean. Ten is the number in scripture that refers to *personal testing*....Therefore, in our text it denotes the *fullness of tribulation!* It does not indicate that the time will be either long or short, but it indicates that a certain definite period is allotted to the devil to test and try and prove the called and elect of God! This period is not determined by the devil, **for the devil possesses no power of himself**, but by the will and counsel of the Lord. The time is both limited and meted out to him by God. We see a beautiful picture of this in the life of Job!

"It is the Lord saying to each of His sons, 'You are not in a position to know how long your trials will last, but I know, and

I can assure you that they will not last a day longer than is necessary for you. If the very hairs of your head are all numbered, and I take note of every sparrow that falls to the ground, you may rest assured that the minutest details of those trials and testings are being carefully weighed in my loving and omnipotent hands, and you will not be tempted above that you are able to bear. Even if the length of your tribulation and trouble were to cover the whole of your lifetime, that will be but ten short days in the unfolding of my magnificent plan for you in the age and the ages to come! ...

"...God is constructing a temple, made of living stones, through which to manifest Himself throughout the ages to come, and Satan was created as a chisel and hammer to be used in the construction of this building. The living stones that are even now being placed in this temple have been chosen, says the Lord, in the *furnace of affliction* (Isa. 48:10). God, however, is mercy; God is love; God is compassion. He is a healer, not a destroyer. It was, nonetheless, necessary that an oven be heated in which to purify the gold — a furnace in which the wood, hay, and stubble were to be burned. But God, in His nature of love, could not perform the necessary affliction!

"It was for this reason that He created *an instrument* that was capable of performing this essential action in the lives of men, for in Satan, God literally created a *chastening rod*. If we can realize that behind the acts of Satan is the mighty hand of God working to bring forth gold from these earthen vessels, we can rejoice, as David, in our afflictions and trials and exclaim with him, 'It is good for me that I have been

afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes' (Ps. 119:7).

"Praise God! When we begin to see the good that comes from the assaults of Satan on our lives, we are able to appreciate all the more the greatness of our God and the depth of the wisdom of His great mind. He is truly a God of might and power, and **all things** are in His hand — even this adversary whom we call the devil!

"Now, since such glories are in store for the sons of God, can any man longer question why our all-wise heavenly Father should take such pains to bring His sons to perfection? None knows better than He exactly what is needed to transform His sons from corrupt and carnal creatures of the dust to beings of divine understanding and heavenly glory. I have often said that I have strong confidence in the ability of my heavenly Father to bring me to perfection and maturity as a son of God. My Father is a great son-raiser! What a colossal success He was with His firstborn! Anyone who can raise a son like Jesus knows exactly what He is doing and can surely handle you and me, my precious brother and sister.

"There is a vast variety of events in our everyday lives uniquely designed to test every area the Lord would put His hand on. Each of us has had a unique set of tests and trials to go through to build the character of Christ in our life. Your trials have not been harder than mine, just different. We are distinct members of the Christ body, and the Lord's processings for each one varies according to His purpose in us and the place we shall fill.

"Though we shall all ultimately be joined in union with Christ as one complete corporate man, each of us will be a unique expression of the fullness of Himself, in a way that only we can express Him. The Lord has a sovereign purpose to fulfill in each of our tests and trials, and He watches over it. To know that the Father has a sovereign purpose in all that we experience and endure may not make the trials any easier to go through. But it gives us understanding, purpose, and hope of the glory that shall be revealed in us when it is finished!" — *From The Candlestick To The Throne, Part 40.*

When we were first called to this walk of faith, we had no idea what we were in for, and had we known we might have balked a little. Now that the heated reality is being driven home, we may want to balk a lot; but it won't do us any good if we have truly caught the vision of our calling. We are here for the long haul, and we will see the end together with and in our Lord.

While these processings forge on in our lives, we will be faced more and more with the one who has the power of death. We would love to see the accuser retreating for at least a short season; but let us not count on it right now; for it is not in his nature nor his calling to do so. He will continue to blow upon the coals until his work is done and we are finished. It is then that we will destroy him.

Due to one verse in the New Testament, and during my earlier years, there was a time when I had entertained the thought that the devil **had** already been destroyed. That thought, however, ended when reality presented its bold face. I saw the scripture being used for that belief and defense was actually saying. I saw that Hebrews

2:14 **did not say** the devil **has been** destroyed:

"That He through death **might** destroy him that **had** the power of death."

First, the word *might* is not in the past tense. According to the Analytical Greek New Testament, ***might destroy*** (*katargese*) is an aorist active verb in the subjunctive mood. In simple terms, *The aorist subjunctive does not refer to the past. It speaks of the future. The aorist subjunctive is an action without any reference to progress or completion.* (rf. Beginner's Grammar of the Greek New Testament, Harper & Row Publishers).

Simply put, the *subjunctive aorist* of ***might destroy*** is **not** a statement which declares a completed act. It speaks of an ongoing desire with no definite end in sight. Therefore, Hebrews 2:14 is not declaring that Jesus destroyed the devil in every person; but that is His goal, and that goal will be reached.

Second, the English word ***had*** is in the past tense, while the Greek *ekonta*, from which it was translated, is in the ***present active***. Therefore, the verse **does not** say:

"That He through death *destroyed* him that *had* the power of death," but rather, "That He through death **is in the process of destroying and will be destroying** him that **presently has** the power of death." Until that arch enemy is destroyed once and for all time, that smith that blows upon the coals will be a very real part of our lives.

This dreadful giant called death will plow on throughout the earth. Until Jesus, there had not been one person who the devil had

not defeated. From the very beginning, every soul has fallen before him, regardless of their power in the earth. They were all fading vapors of smoke while this murderer had his way. The inscription on his dark banner has been *DEATH*. He is cold and merciless. To no avail, hundreds of thousands of millions have begged for mercy; but from that enemy there has been none. No family or generation has been exempt from this destroyer.

Death has had legions of confidants. Proceeding before him are the hordes of all the weaknesses, sorrows, suffering, fears, sins, sickness, anguish, pains, heartaches, maladies, and infirmities of all kinds. They have all seriously touched every family and plagued all of humanity. In closing to quote our dear friend again:

"It was, indeed, an awesome force to behold! There were legions of cancer and columns of heart disease; squadrons of viruses and battalions of infection. There were cohorts of malnutrition and armies of accidents. There were horsemen of fear and platoons of sin. There were squadrons of war and regiments of pestilence and plague. It was, indeed, the most fearful, the most formidable army which had ever been arrayed!

"He drilled them in the snows of the north and in the jungles of the south. He pitched the tents of the morgue, and threw up the embankments of the cemetery. He slew most with a single blow of the sword; others were taken by long sieges of evil habits. He knocked with his bony hands at the doors of hospital rooms, and at the doors of bedrooms. Presidents and prime ministers, kings and sultans, czars and dictators fell alike beneath the wheels of his war chariot. He

was the victor in all battles!

"None could stay his hand or stop his advance, until.....until that day when there appeared in Jerusalem one whose countenance was like the morning, one who strode forward unafraid and entered into the very camp of this giant himself. Death confidently reaches out its bony hands and takes this Jesus of Nazareth and lifts Him up from the earth and impales Him upon a cross. He then takes the mortal spear and plunges it into His heart. Jesus, with a loud cry, gives up the ghost and dies. Blackness and death cover the land and hope dies! There is none who can stay our foe, or so it seemed that dark day when the very earth trembled and shook under the power of death!

"Then — at the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, when there was but the slightest shimmering of dawn on the horizon, a token of that which was to come, suddenly out of the blackness of the tomb emerged a figure clothed in white. Out of the tomb He came, His garments glistening with light. In the midst of that darkness the Prince of Life and the King of Death had been locked in mortal combat, the like of which the world had never seen. Christ came out, not to the roar of hundreds of thousands, but He came out alone, having conquered death within Himself. Like Sampson in Gaza, He tore up the gates of death and carried away the bars of the grave. Coming forth from that dark battle in the grave, He held in His left hand the broken seal of the sepulcher, and in His right hand the key to all the cemeteries of the world and every spectrum of death!

And now the whole world is standing on tiptoe, waiting with bated breath, to behold the glorious sight of the **FIRSTFRUITS OF HIS REDEMPTION** coming forth — the many brethren of our Lord, who are destined by God's plan and purpose to be *the next company* to fully partake of HIS VICTORY!

"For as in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive. But each in his *own rank and order*. Christ, the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His *parousia*. Then cometh the end (of the making alive), when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father....for He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. And the last enemy that shall be destroyed is *death*' (1 Cor. 15:22-26).

"Because of Christ's victory death shall be abolished for and in all men! Yet there is an order, a progressive unfolding of this wonderful work of God. The scripture quoted above clearly reveals that precise order. Jesus Himself was the first to fully and completely conquer death so that He lives, spirit, soul, and body, never to die anymore! Then by His *parousia*, which is His *presence*, His life shall so be raised up in a firstfruits company that these, His many brethren, the manifest sons of God, shall experience the full power of His resurrection and be so changed until their mortal and physical bodies are transformed and fashioned like unto His glorious body. Then, progressively, through God's great *plan of the ages*, this glorious salvation shall be ministered to all men everywhere by resurrection, restoration, and salvation. What

a salvation! What a God! What a plan!" — **J. Preston Eby,**
From The Candlestick To The Throne, Part 37.

It is a plan for which we yearn to be real in our own lives; but I know it will not come while nursing or picking at our wounds, or thinking no one has suffered as we have suffered. We all have our *valley of fires* to cross. Each valley is designed especially for each of us, and we could not be made complete without our own personal one. Although skin worms may devour our bodies, in our flesh we shall see God **Job 19:26**. He will not be estranged from us, and we will say, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now **mine eye seeth thee.**" **Job 42:5.**

Death and sorrow has truly cut a deep trench into all of our lives, and with them seemingly constant companions, there is an end to both. His light already shines unto a perfect day; for He is rising over the eastern horizon. His light is overcoming the night. The shadows are fleeing away. Let us, therefore, rejoice and be blessed today and always in **the joy and power of His life!**

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