

~ Rivers in Eden: The Way to Paradise ~

I wrote the next section of this book a couple of years ago and have been working on it for over 3 years. I talk about what I believe to be different stages we find ourselves in while trying to get closer to the Lord (4 stages). Our horses also go through these same stages. There is a lot more I want to add regarding these 4 stages and tie it all back into the theme of the book (God and man, horse and man).

I reference 2 different places in Scripture regarding these stages. However, the Lord has shown me 5 more references (a total of 7) that I believe show us we must go through different stages to reach spiritual maturity. The Lord opened my eyes to these different stages a while back and I prayed for confirmation. In a very short time period God led me to a writer from the 1600's named Madam Guyon. Similar to what God showed me, He spoke to her regarding different rivers (stages) that God leads us through.

I love the confirmation we can receive from God. When God started speaking to me about returning to Eden, returning to perfection, in less than a week my pastor out of the blue sent me George Fox's journal. Fox spoke of the exact same thing that the Lord had been showing me. God is awesome. He truly does want to teach His children.

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Several years ago the Lord gave me the most sacred gift. He gave me Mononucleosis. In His love He kept me from the pit of destruction, **“Surely it was for my benefit that I suffered such anguish. In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back” (Isaiah 38:17)**. He loved me so much He helped me to die to my flesh, so that I could live in His Spirit. I was very sick and weak, but when I spent time in His presence, He made me strong. So naturally, I spent lots of time in the Spirit and what the Lord showed me was truly out of this world.

One time I was praying, and the Lord showed me a box. Inside that box, was God. I approached the box and once I saw God was inside it, I wanted to get inside of it. I walked up to the box and began shaking it, thinking that maybe He would fall out. When that didn't work, I tried tapping it a little and that didn't work either. The more I thought about getting in the box and saw that I could not, the more frustrated I began to get.

Soon I was beating the box with all that I had. I was kicking it, hitting it, and then I had a bat and was beating it for all I was worth. Eventually, I was exhausted. I fell to the ground breathing hard, with sweat rolling down my face. It was at this point that I saw the box had a keyhole. I asked the Lord, “What is the key?” And he told me, ***“The Lord rewards those with patience with kindness and love.”***

The Lord is the same yesterday, today, and forever, **“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8)**. When we read our Bibles, we read stories of people doing amazing things and God revealing Himself in amazing ways. God has not changed, only

the people who are serving Him have. I know that the Lord wants to use me, and I am excited about that. However, He wants all of me. Therefore, I want as much of Him on this earth as I can have. I pray that He will show me what is holding me back from tasting what Moses tasted, and experiencing what the apostles experienced.

I thought it was pretty simple: spend time in the Spirit, read your Bible, be transformed into His image, and He will take us to the Father. I had been spending time in the Spirit, and He had been revealing little pieces of heaven to me.

However, what He has been showing me lately is that it is not easy at all. Jesus was crucified, and apostles were tortured. It is a grueling process to die to your self. I had been pressing into His presence, and He had showered me with His love. The Lord wanted me to give up everything, but I guess I still wanted to hold on to some things. He showed me some things when I was praying, that I wouldn't fully understand until later.

Once as I was praying, I saw myself wanting to run to Him, but chains were holding me back. Another time, there were meat hooks that were digging into my flesh, that would not let me go. In the same way that the horse's self-preservation holds them back from true unity with us, our flesh holds us back from true unity with the Lord. I thought that I was trying to serve Him, but I guess I didn't understand what your "all" meant. Some time went by. I went through a little tribulation. I quit charging after Him with the same intensity and He quit revealing Himself to me like He had been.

This summer I felt like I was to get a Strong's Concordance and dig into Scripture the same way I did in the Spirit. This was the first verse He gave me: **"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"** (Philippians 3:14 KJV). I looked up **mark** in the Strong's and it meant *to peer about, "skeptical" though the idea of concealment, a goal: mark*. It was akin to another word meaning *to dig*. So that is exactly what I did.

I use the King James Version of the Bible to do my *digging* in Scripture. The King James Version is translated word for word as best they could, and most of the other versions are translated thought for thought. It is my belief, that the original writings of Scripture were the inspired Word of God. With recent translations we cannot be sure that the translators were in the same Spirit as the men of God who originally wrote them. "Therefore how should they be able to bear being told that nay should grow up to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, when they cannot bear to hear that any should come, whilst upon earth, into the same power and Spirit that the prophets and apostles were in? Though it be a certain truth, that none can understand their writings aright without the same Spirit by which they were written" (Fox, 1997).

However, I do not feel that the King James Version is the only Bible to read. There are certainly many other versions that are much easier to read. Although, I do feel when we are digging into Scripture, to truly understand the hidden treasures of Christ, the King James is the version that is best.

I started in Genesis and looked up Eden. Eden means *region of Adam's home*, the same as a word meaning *pleasure, to be soft or pleasant, to live voluptuously, a house of pleasure*.

Cain was sent out of the Lord's presence and went to the land of Nod. Nod means *vagrancy, exile, wandering, to Nod, waver, flee, disappear, taunt*. I fully understood the meaning of these words. I had lived in both of these places, but wanted to learn how to stay in Eden.