

JOURNEY TO GRAGAU

A Trip to Hell and Back



By A. W. Trenholm

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Perhaps at some time in your life you have felt a presence near you, one that you could not see. Or perhaps you are one of those who have seen. Maybe you have seen one of the good ones. Maybe you have encountered one of the bad ones. Either way you realized there is much about life and yourself that remains a mystery, that there is all around you a great unseen yet all seeing world, and your life can never be the same.

Cover and illustrations by A.W. Trenholm

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Foreword

I realize in writing this sequel to *Journey to Tricon* that there is certain information and background that the reader should be made aware of if he is to understand and accept the shocking reality behind what I am about to tell you. I am speaking of hidden worlds, and astounding and terrible events that are rapidly culminating into the decisive moment of history we are about to enter.

It is a troubling fact that our humble planet is not only home to humanity, but that we are presently host to a gathering army of beings not from our world, nor of our flesh, and certainly not of our spirit.—Beings who are locked in continual warring conflict with the wise and ancient ones including the very Founder of our world. He is the Progenitor and Protector of all that is right, and we trust He will make a way of rescuing us in the soon coming battle.

Our Earth is to become the final staging ground for events set in motion millenniums gone by, but so terrifying that even our worst nightmares cannot begin to describe it. The seeds of this great conflict were cast into the soil of creation long before we ever existed. Unfortunately the seeds of this entanglement have grown up and woven themselves into the very fabric of our being. Humanity has become inextricably embroiled in this conflict through our pride, ignorance, and sins. Although we are destined to play an integral part in this final great drama, the skills needed to triumph far exceed our human abilities.

We who are human have only a few years of life in which to discover the hidden plan of Him who has kept His power and role in creation a guarded secret since before the world was formed. Even His existence remains such a point of raging controversy that the entire foundation of Christianity has been fractured into diverse congregations. His simple message of love has been diluted by private interpretations, speculations, and theories. Some are so zealous and convinced that their interpretation

of Him is correct that any who might interject a variance may pay with their life. Such is the present state of the path to enlightenment.

Who or what then is this mysterious Being, the Prince of Peace who shall prevail in this heavenly conflict? Scripture has left us a clue, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”¹ In a certain place the Father of All spoke these words, “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.”²

We do not know when He came into being, but we know that God’s greater plan is being progressively revealed in Him. The Bible tells us that all things that appear were made in the beginning by the Word of God. He emanated from the Spirit of God the Father, to become a Light to all who were destined to love Him. He was the first born. He became flesh and dwelt among us, assuring us of God’s great love. His being became known to us as Jesus. Our human and non-human population are now being recruited in great numbers to Him or to His fierce rival, Satan. At stake is our eternal destiny and the destiny of our planet.

In the book, *Journey to Tricon*, I was supernaturally taken into the heavenly dimension and recorded the things I saw and experienced. Whereas, *Journey to Gragau*, which takes place some years later was a different experience. I had been searching and seeking out the answers to my many questions. For years I have wondered about Hell, where it was and what it was really like. There are so many intimidating misrepresentations of Hell and the Devil, that after taking such a wonderful trip into the Heavenlies, it only seemed natural that I get to experience the other side as well. The Bible offers only glimpses of this dark realm, some of which seem contradictory. When and why did God create hell? Was it a warning to Fallen angels, and anyone else, of terrible judgment to come?

¹ **John1:14**

² **Psalm 2:7**

Journey to Gragau was God's answer to my request. It came complete with scripture references, plus a beautiful guide to answer my many questions.

The following is a description of one man's journey through the forbidden zone, and is intended for mature readers, as a sequel to *Journey to Tricon*. My purpose in recording and writing this book is to focus the reader's attention on the great spiritual battle that is fomenting, and hopefully to help them better understand the world of forces that make war for or against them in the ever escalating cosmic battle which is coming to its climax as we speak. Realizing that some of the situations, ideas, explanations and suggestions found in this book may seem to challenge certain commonly accepted assumptions and beliefs, I have included the Scripture references I received in the footnotes. For the most part unless otherwise indicated, all Scriptures quoted are from the King James Version of the Bible. I pray that this journey to Hell will be as enriching an experience for you as it was for me.

--A. W. Trenholm

1. The Horseman

Sleep eluded me. Somehow I felt the evening was far from over. There was a strange, almost electric anticipation in the air, sort of like the feeling you get when coming into a familiar room and there is something different about it. You look around to see if you've been burglarized or if someone else is in the room. But when you find that all seems to be in order, you ascribe the impression to your imagination. I lay a long while in the dark of my room pondering the strangeness of the events that had brought me to this place in my life. I remembered the wonderful time I had with Jamal in Tricon,³ and I longed to spend another day in the heavenlies. Slowly the warm waters of sleep dissolved my thoughts and I began to drift off. There is a world of mystery and timelessness in that twilight between the conscious and the subconscious, in that quiet, undefined zone between wakefulness and dreams.

At first I could not make out what the sound could be. The pounding approached until it seemed nearly upon me, and then suddenly stopped. Only an animal's snorting and heavy breathing could still be heard somewhere close by, very close, in the darkness. I felt the eerie chill of goose bumps and that clammy sensation you get when you realize that you are not alone in some dark and solitary place, and know you are being watched by unseen eyes. I turned my head in the direction of the noise, but saw nothing save the dark shadows of my own room. My imagination must be feeding me misleading information. How could there be anything or anyone there, for I live on the fourth floor of the building?

³ See: Journey to Tricon by A.W. Trenholm

"Show yourself!" I called out somewhat hesitantly. "What is it that you want with me?"

Then before my eyes the darkened wall of my room receded like frost on a window pane, revealing what appeared to be a passageway or tunnel-like entrance leading off to another place, coexistent to my own. This other world, however, was vastly different from the world I had visited in my previous adventure. This world was darker, fraught with fears and hidden perils. In short, it gave me a feeling of utter dread to behold.

Alien and foreboding as it initially appeared to be, there was something hauntingly familiar about it. It was as though some part of me had always known this place existed. Perhaps I had seen it somewhere in my dreams, or the inner eye of my subconscious had caught a glimpse of it somehow, somewhere.

The whole experience was like discovering a secret passage in your own home, a hidden stairwell leading off into the darkness. But this portal, I feared, did not lead to a world of flesh and blood beings. It led to a world of spirits, of what kind and nature I hesitated to imagine, but the knot in my gut told me they were most certainly not all good.

I do not remember when or how I got out of bed. I just seemed to be instantly up and making my way toward this darkened entrance, drawn by a great curiosity to at least peer into this foreboding realm. Trembling, I cautiously approached the entrance, wondering what dreaded specter or creature was there, waiting for me in those murky shadows. Was this one of the dread horsemen of the Apocalypse?

As the dark mist dissipated, there standing before me was a very large horse, blacker than the night itself, its breath bursting from its nostrils. On his back was a mysterious shadowy figure. My heart



pounded as I approached. Was this the Death Angel come for me? I had never imagined that my end would be as dark and dismal as this.

I expected that the dark rider would suddenly raise an unseen sickle and sever my spirit from my body. I had hoped that my death would have been a more joyful occasion. More along the lines of entering a tunnel of light and seeing dear friends and departed loved ones and

angels coming to get me and take me home to Heaven. I had not expected to have to face a solitary dark rider at the doors of what seemed like the entrance to Hell. If this was indeed Death come for me, it was not at all as I had anticipated. I broke the silence, "Am I to die?"

"Not yet," came the cryptic reply from the shadowy figure, in a voice that sounded surprisingly youthful. Feeling a little more encouraged, I stepped forward, approaching the dark specter, a bit surprised by my own boldness in what obviously was a rather serious situation. Still, other than the oddity of it all, I did not feel any real sense of immediate danger. If this creature meant to do me harm I most certainly would already be dead, or at least in a terrible fight for my life.

As I approached I could see that the rider wore a cloak with a cowl covering his face. It reinforced my fear that he bore no good news for me. I noticed too that he was armed. He wore a sword, the hilt of which

I could see only a bit of as it glittered in whatever light there was. This strange rider appeared to be a youthful warrior from this mysterious world adjacent to my own. Who was this shadowy person? Why had he come to me? Was he indeed a messenger from the bowels of Hell or whatever they call this dark region from which he came?

Perhaps we had it all wrong. Maybe Hell was really just an ancient regime lurking in the shadows of our world, an unseen parallel dimension lumbering silently along beside us through time? Reason suggested that whoever or whatever creatures dwelt in this region, they lived more primitive lifestyles, riding horses and doing battle with swords in hand to hand combat. Yet deeper instincts warned me that such a conclusion might be totally wrong. The spiritual forces I felt sweeping over me from this place seemed to render the instruments of modern warfare irrelevant.

A wave of mixed emotions began to sweep through me, partly excitement and the thrill of adventure, partly fear, dread and trepidation. The figure was now very close by and somewhat silhouetted by an eerie glow that came from a murky light that emanated from somewhere beyond. As my eyes adjusted I could see that the rider's hair was long and his features fine. I was more than a little surprised to finally realize that the rider was a young woman, perhaps still in her later teens.

"If you have sufficient faith and courage, Travis, you may come with me on a mission through this region." I was further shocked to hear her use my name. She continued, "I am come to offer to take you on a second journey, but this one involves a certain amount of peril and danger, unlike your last journey."

"Does this place have a name?" I asked, a bit fearful of what the answer might be.

"This place has many names, depending on the purpose of your visit here. Some call it Paradise, some call it The Valley of the Dead, the grave, but the common name for it is Hell."

Now in my understanding, Hell is a place where the damned are perpetually tormented for the evil deeds they have done. Bathed in the fire and brimstone of God's hot displeasure, they have lost all hope for a cessation of their suffering.

At the moment I was neither spiritually ready nor willing to enter into this "Dante's Inferno" without more assurances than the words "a certain amount of peril and danger" implied.

"I am on a mission in the service of the Lord of Life and you have been granted permission to accompany me if you have the faith. I will be your guide and guardian in this region," she said. "But you must do your part. You must gird up your loins. Stay close to the Lord in your heart. Be in prayer, and watch that you do not enter into temptation. For very powerful forces are at work here, day and night. This is the region of the Dark Lion, the lion that walks in the night seeking whom he may devour. This is the region controlled by the Dread Prince who walks up and down through the Earth, the Prince of the Fallen Ones. You must watch and pray, Travis, and prepare yourself for battle."

"Will we be seen by these dark ones?" I asked.

"We will," she said.

"But will they not attack us the moment they see us?"

"Possibly, but we are here with the Lord's blessing, so they should not attack readily, for they still respect the power of the Lord and His Spirit enough to know not to attack without occasion. But we must see that we give no occasion for them to become upset. We must give no reason for them to attack. And keep in mind that some regions are more dangerous for us than others. Some are closer to the seat of Satan

in the darkest parts of his kingdom, the darkest recesses, the deepest places in his realm. But you must understand that not all who are here are as evil as he or his fallen ones. And there are many here who still seek the light, whose souls cry out for deliverance from the chains of torment and guilt that bind them. There are those who see hope in the power of prayer to one day be set free from their great oppressor. I can assure you that there is no greater joy than to liberate oppressed souls from this region."

"Why have I been chosen?" I questioned.

"You are a believer and a scribe among the children of the living, and have proven to be an excellent medium and probe into other worlds. You seek the answers that people want to know, and record the mysteries of the spirit world in terms the living can understand. So will you accompany me or not? Is your faith sufficient to face a voyage into this dread region?"

How can anyone know how much faith they have? It is not really something you can easily measure within yourself. Faith is an inner force, a spiritual confidence and power that comes through believing the Word of God. So the real question I felt I was being asked was whether I believed God could keep me even in such a frightful place as this was reported to be.

Yes, I did believe He could keep me, but I decided that I had better ask the Lord first for myself if it was all right to go with her or not, before committing myself. What if she were a demon sent to take me to my final destruction?

Whenever I am faced with tough decisions like this, I find that it is best to ask God directly. So I shot up a quick prayer for His guidance as to whether or not I should accept this amazing offer from a cloaked stranger on a black horse, standing at what seemed to me to be an entrance of Hell itself.

Instantly I began to hear in my heart Psalm 23, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." A great peace and assurance flooded my soul—an assurance I most certainly needed and would cling to for dear life through the strange events that followed.

"Yes, I will come with you!—Can you assure me that my body will be safe while I'm gone." I replied in full faith and determination.

"I can assure you." Having said that, she added, "I will prepare you now for the journey ahead, for it will not be an easy one."

Having said that, the figure on the horse suddenly pulled out her sword and without a

word of warning thrust the point into my chest. I let out a startled gasp and stumbled backward, but I felt no pain, rather a warm, reassuring strengthening filled every fiber of my being. The blade glowed momentarily and then emitted a burst of light that engulfed my body. I felt myself being



transformed in an instant. I was no longer an aging man in the autumn of my life but I was young again, strong and youthful like the figure on the horse. I felt so very alive, and full of the desire for an adventure. I was overflowing with wild exuberance and youthful abandon, ready to rush in where angels and old men fear to tread. And there was more.



This sudden renewal of my body brought with it a warm, wonderful, tingling, sensual sensation. I felt my body awakening as if spring was returning to my manhood. I took on the stature and physique of a fit and firm, mature and muscular young man. That was a sensation I had not known in years. I felt I could mount up with the wings of an eagle, that I could run and not get tired. I felt totally renewed and regenerated. The

alluvial accumulations of old age, the aches and pains, were gone, washed away by the flood tide of life now flowing through me.

Covering my newly rejuvenated, and I might add, significantly less well clad youthful body, was a short white tunic-like gown of a very fine linen-like fabric. Over this was some kind of armor-like covering that reminded me of ancient Roman times. It was made of hardened leather or a metal-like substance and covered my back and chest. The upper part of my arms and legs remained bare, but my forearms and shins had coverings. It took several moments to adjust to the overwhelming yet exhilarating sensation of being so suddenly different, so bodily aware, so very young again.

"I am sorry I had to do that so quickly to you, but we are in a battle zone and must keep moving," the young woman said, bringing her horse up alongside of me. The animal was so huge that the top of my head seemed only level with its back. The young warrior took her foot out of her stirrup. It was a stretch but I managed to get my foot in it. She then reached back and took my hand and with incredible strength lifted me onto the horse behind her in one powerful pull.

My next sensation was of awkward embarrassment as I found myself in the bodily form of a young man dressed in what seemed less than adequate clothing. These sensations were interrupted suddenly, as the horse turned and lunged forward nearly sending me flying off its back and onto the ground. I grabbed out and caught hold of the young woman's cowl and held on. Her long hair splashed suddenly across my face. I felt myself flush with color. My tongue and throat felt that dry and nervous "I need to swallow" sensation that hits a man in a sensually charged situation. My heart was pounding under the bombardment of so many emotions and sensations rushing through me at once. My mind was in turmoil over the sudden rise of my newly acquired libido and I struggled somewhat unsuccessfully to maintain what I thought to be the appropriate level of physical response of a believer chosen for this adventure.

For the moment I was thankful she was in front of me so she could not see my face—although I suspected that anyone with such spiritual powers as she had, could easily know more about me than I dared imagine. My suspicions were confirmed when she turned with an understanding "I know all" smile and said, "Please, don't worry about that right now. We'll attend to that later."

My Catholic mind replied, *“Well, at least I don’t have to worry about going to Hell for my thoughts and the way my body is responding. It seems that I’m going there anyway!”*

“Okay, Buccopherous, go up!” she commanded. Up the horse carried us through the rocky tunnel-like passageway. Up and up we clambered through what must have been a passage or a portal that linked our worlds. The dark walls of the cavern seemed strangely alive. I felt like I was being watched by a thousand eyes. I not only could feel the watchers, but they could also reach out and feel me. A thousand cold fingers from ages past, reached out and touched me. We seemed to be passing up through various strata of rock formations, and each level seemed to harbor untold thousands of souls staring in dismay. In some places the winding passage was so dark and narrow I could only cling to my attractive host and hope we would come to an opening soon. I nearly screamed out as a cold, clammy hand grasped hold of my leg. I would have, had I not then seen that we were nearly at the opening to the passageway, and the hand let go.



2. The Kingdom of the Spirits

How good it felt to be out of that place. A light breeze cooled the beads of sweat that had formed on my face. We emerged into what seemed like a relatively bright place in a rather dry, rocky, wilderness area not unlike some of the harsh alien-like landscapes that can be seen on postcards back in my home world. I was taken by surprise at the rather beautiful panoramic view that swept out around us as far as the eye could see.

We seemed to have emerged quite high up on the side of a rocky slope. My host halted the horse for a moment to let me take it all in. After a moment of looking around, she turned and gazed into my eyes. She was as beautiful as I imagined Helen of Troy to be. Her skin was a beautiful olive color, her hair black as night, and her eyes two mysterious dark pools of excitement and adventure. Her face was fine featured with a cute distinct nose common to those from Mediterranean lands.

"My name is Elatia," she said, introducing herself with a look so penetrating and invasive that I know I must have flushed. I managed to stumble out that my name was Travis, though I knew she already knew that. Then she smiled a smile so warm and refreshing I thought my heart would stop beating. Her look of vigilant intensity returned as her eyes made a quick survey of the mountainside. "We cannot linger here very long," she said. "I think we have already been spotted. We must go quickly."

I must have looked like a school boy in the front row who was dying to ask his teacher a question. She flashed her enticing smile again and said, "All right! What is it that you want to know?"

Curious as I was to know everything about this new and amazing world, I used my first question to ask about the passageway we had just

come through. "What were those things down there? That was totally creepy!"

"Those are the rock people. They are spirits that have been bound into the rock strata of the earth. The world we are entering is part physical and part spiritual. There is a purely spiritual dimension which exists beyond this one."

"How did those spirits get there?"

"Many are from the old world. They lived in the time before the great Flood. Their world became violent, perverse, and wicked and they perished in the great Deluge. The rubble and ruins of their ancient cities and civilizations became their tomb and the prison house of their spirits. They were so joined to the idolatrous works of their own hands, often built at the price of human bloodshed, that they are now bound into the layers of rock that formed from the debris of their once glorious world. It's now their prison and their purgatory. It is often the fate of unsaved souls that have done many wrong things in a place, to be bound in the spirit to the place or thing they esteemed in life to be more important than God or others."

"Like haunted houses and things like that?"

"Yes. Something like that, only a little more serious in this case, I am sad to say. The crust of the Earth is one great multi-layered graveyard, a history sandwich, where the ruins of one generation are piled upon another."

What strange world had I come to—partly physical and partly spiritual? What would I discover here? What dangers awaited me? Who was this strange person I suddenly felt so comfortable with who was to be my guardian and guide in this region that lay beyond my normal senses, in this place of "prisons" and oppressions. And how could there be anything

good, any place of hope in such a region, where all hope I presumed to be gone?

My moment of meditation was cut short when out of a crack in the rock a dark creature suddenly materialized, leaped up and began shouting at us. "I knew you were coming. I saw you come through! You will never leave this place, I'll see to that. Now you are trapped and damned like the rest of us.""

"Oops!" Elatia said. "He's bluffing, but it's definitely time to go. You really can't hang around in this place too long. Hold tight!!" With a snap of the reigns the great horse leaped forward. Brandishing a spear, the crazed creature tried to cut us off. The narrow path we were on led down to a large plain below. The man, for I presumed it was a man under all his dark rags, moved surprisingly quickly over the rocks, intent on cutting off our only way of escape. In a moment he was beside us, his weapon poised to strike.

"Jug Yhet!" Elatia called to her horse, and jabbed her heel into its left side. The horse, clearly trained for battle, suddenly veered out of the way to avoid the thrust from the menacing spear, which narrowly missed slashing my right arm. Then before he could reposition himself, I saw Elatia's leg kick out in a crushing blow to the man's chest. He fell backward, lost his balance, and tumbled down the very rough, rocky incline. At least gravity seemed to still work in this dimension. The horse instantly turned and jumped back down on the path, nearly jolting me off, and we resumed our descent.

"Who or what was that?" I queried.

That was a gatekeeper," she replied.

The brief encounter had taught me two things: one, that we were obviously not welcome here, and two, sometimes the rule that you should

agree with your adversary quickly while you are in the way with him might not always apply, especially here.

“It is a good thing his spear didn’t cut you,” Elatia said. “They are dipped in a very poisonous compound, water from the fountain of confusion that infects your body with a most excruciating fever of doubts. Only angel powers can heal one of such wounds.”

“He fell pretty hard. What will happen to him?” I queried. “Obviously he won’t die from his fall, but he is in some sense physical, and can feel and experience things much like a living being.”

“Many of the things you see and experience in this dimension are the manifest realities created by the being itself. His ragged clothing and spear were the appearances of things he used and found to be effective when he was alive in your dimension. They are the visual manifestations of the various things he likes.”



“Do you mean what we saw and what happened was not real? He certainly looked real to me.”

“All I am saying is that not all you see in this region is as it appears to be. Depending on the rank in the spirit of the creature involved, it can change its shape and form to most affect its victim.”

We continued to work our way down the rocky incline until we reached level ground. Before us lay a vast and totally barren plain, and far in the distance I could make out the misty blue line of another mountain range. Off to the left, there appeared to be a great sandstorm in progress. Elatia halted the horse for a moment.

“Where are we going?” I asked, as we seemed to be out of immediate danger.

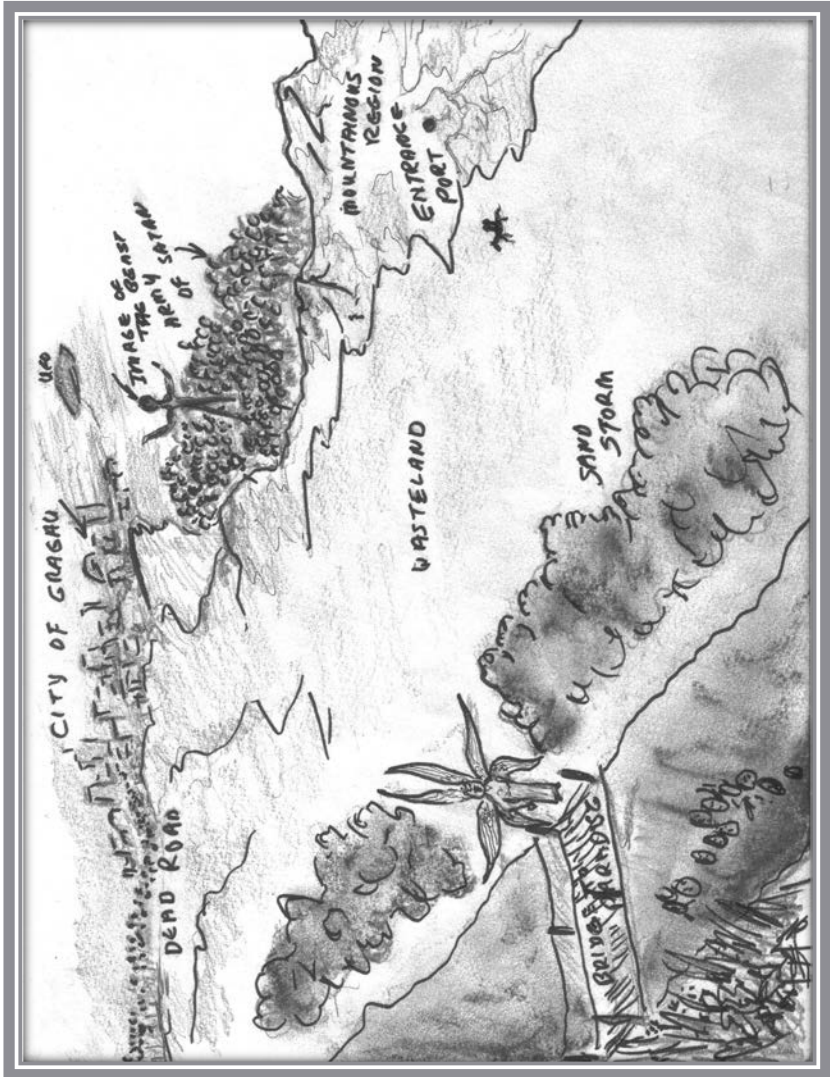
“Well, first we are going to the Sanctuary or Paradise as it was once called. It’s located in the sacred zone which is where you see that sandstorm. We will spend the night there, and head out in the morning when we have had a chance to rest up a bit.”

I breathed a sigh of relief to hear that they had regular days and nights here and that there existed a place called the “Sanctuary” where we could rest.

“The Sanctuary? That sounds like a place I never expected to find in Hell,” I answered, obviously surprised to discover that there was anywhere in this region that was remotely good. Elatia said we were riding straight for it, but the huge sandstorm didn’t appeal to me at all.

I had only seen sandstorms like this in movies. It appeared to be a great wall of churning, smothering, blinding sand at least as high as a six- or seven-story building, but strangely enough, it didn't appear to be moving. It remained a dense wall of swirling sand shrouding the Sanctuary and forming a perpetual and impenetrable barrier. As we approached, the

sound of the howling wind and blowing sand was almost deafening, and I felt a great apprehension about even coming this close to it.



3. The Sanctuary

We were galloping into a wall of sand in the middle of a barren wasteland in the heart of Hell.

There was no sign of this wonderful place called Sanctuary or Paradise, that Elatia had said was not far away. The sandstorm stood like a great silicon barrier blocking our sight as well as our way. The torrent of driven sand, traveling with such a force that the swirling grains stung my skin, filled my lungs until I began to cough violently. It was impossible to breathe in this blinding vortex of misery. I coughed violently and felt Elatia, dismount and draw her sword as she led the horse still deeper into the storm cloud. She seemed to cut away at the swirling sand until a patch of open ground was cleared, and I could see what appeared to be a bridge leading to an entrance just the other side of this very wide and very deep chasm. Across this gulf I could see beautiful hills and white houses surrounded by lovely trees and gardens.

"That is the Sanctuary! It is a safe place for travelers such as us to rest and pray and prepare for our difficult journey ahead. It is also a place where searching and penitent spirits can learn more about God. Of course, they first need the faith to get through the sandstorm. Many such secure havens are set aside by God as spiritual reserves. The truth is that this sacred zone has existed ever since the very beginning when the Lord created the Earth. This zone was originally much larger and acted as a base where angels could come and rest, and relax a bit. Since the time of the Fall and the slaying of Abel, it has served many different purposes. For a long time it became the resting place of the good spirits of people who died before Jesus came. Those souls from the predeluvian world who were found worthy all waited here for the Promised One to appear and establish the Kingdom of God. Some had to wait hundreds of earth years. It became

a great school for learning patience and wisdom, as they were able to see the fruit their lives bore on the Earth.”

This revelation only increased my curiosity and although we both were eager to cross over the bridge, I had questions I wanted to ask. Elatia was ever patient and understanding of this novice’s insistence on quizzing her about everything and disrupting her mission of rescuing people out of Hell.

“You mean to tell me that this place was like a reservation for the spirits of just people?” I asked.

“Yes, some of them came here, but some were taken up higher in the spirit to the place we call the mountain of God. Jesus had not finished building New Jerusalem yet. Building a special city for them was only the beginning of His great plan for bringing the Kingdom of God to Earth. But first He had to finish His mission on Earth.”

“Getting back to understanding Heaven, Saint Paul says that he was caught up to the third Heaven.⁴ Are there different levels of Heaven?” I asked, eager to understand more.

“Yes, there are different levels in Heaven, but getting to go to a higher level works the opposite from getting a promotion on Earth. In God’s Kingdom those who go higher are humble souls who were the servants of all.

“Jesus commissioned the building of New Jerusalem⁵ so that those who His Father had given Him could be with Him to behold the glory which

⁴ **1 Corinthians 12:2** I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago— whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows— such a man was caught up to the third heaven.

⁵ **Revelation 21:2** And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **Revelation 3:12** Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which*

His loving Father had given Him before the world began.⁶ There were a lot of angels and saints at work helping Him to build it, along with His Father as well. But His city was not the only dwelling place for those righteous men and women who died before He came to Earth. Each person was judged according to his works, and taken to a place or position in the spirit world fitting his station, the role he played on Earth. Different saints went to different levels in the city of the living God.⁷ Remember that Jesus and the angels, and presumably certain saints, lived in a very nice Heaven even before the world was created.⁸

I asked, "Can you give me an example of anyone who went to Paradise, Heaven or Hell?"

"Yes. The thief on the cross who repented was told by Jesus 'Today, shalt thou be with me in paradise.'⁹ Jesus also told the story of the rich man who went to Hell and saw Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham.¹⁰ In that

is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

⁶ **John 17:24** Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

⁷ **Heb. 12:22,23** But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

⁸ **Hebrews 12:22** But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

⁹ **Luke 23:43.** And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

¹⁰ **Luke 20:23-25** And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And

example we see a man punished in Hell and we see Abraham and Lazarus up in Heaven. But remember the story of the witch in 1 Samuel who called up Samuel at Saul's request. Samuel's spirit was at rest in the Earth.¹¹ Where do you think Samuel went when he died? Up to Heaven to be with Abraham and Lazarus, or down to the Paradise in Hades in order to reflect a bit more on his life?"

"It seems that he went down to reflect a bit on his life on Earth. Maybe because Samuel, like his mentor Eli, had raised some problematic sons."

"That seems possible," she said, then continued her explanation. "Jesus went to Hell when He died, but the Devil had no hold on Him, and He took the keys of death and Hell from Satan. He then went to Paradise and spoke to all the saints of old waiting for Him there. On the third day He began a triumphal march right through Hell with all of His saints, and began to witness to all the spirits in Hell.¹² And He commanded that a bridge be set across the gap. Many of the deceased saints then appeared in Jerusalem as

he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

¹¹ **1 Samuel 28:8,13-15** And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee. And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself. And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?

¹² **1 Peter 4:6** For for this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh.

witnesses to the people.¹³ This was the first resurrection. Those were incredible times, full of marvelous triumphs and terrible atrocities. Tomorrow is the anniversary of His victorious march through Hell.”

“Well, it sounds like a very great event that we know little about! Satan has kept the accounts of Jesus’ conquest as quiet as possible. These people had lived good lives, believing that someday a Savior would come.¹⁴ From what you are saying I am seeing that you don’t have to be a church-going Christian to get into Heaven, but you do need to believe that God is love.

Elatia finished my thoughts by adding, “Jesus is the Savior of the world, but few realize that even if you didn’t know about Him personally in this life, you can still learn about Him and accept Him even after you are dead. Jesus said, ‘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’.”¹⁵

Surprised by this revelation, I said, “This whole concept is not like anything I’ve ever heard about in all my life on earth. None of these early saints of God were Christians per se or even Hebrews, so I presume they became believers through personally seeing and hearing the Good News of salvation from Jesus Himself.”

¹³ **Matthew 27:52,53** And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

¹⁴ **Jude 1:14** And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

¹⁵ **John 11:25-26** Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

John 5:24-25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 5: 25 Verily, verily, 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.

“You are getting it! I myself was never a Christian, or a Jew; such categories have no meaning here. There are just two groups that people fit into: simply put, they are either a sheep or a goat. And there are just two rules in life and they are: firstly, to love God with your whole heart and secondly, to love your neighbor as yourself. The Holy Spirit strives to teach all of mankind the truth of love.”

“Is there any hope for those who didn’t make it into New Jerusalem the first time around to eventually be accepted in?” I asked.

“That will be our job for millenniums to come, to lead and feed others not in the city yet with the healing fruit from the tree of life that grows in the city.”¹⁶

“Wow! This is really expanding my concept of what the spirit world has to offer.”

“Well I hope that your understanding of Hell is expanding so you can share your experiences. Not many have been here and lived to report about it.”

“Just what is the material that the soul is made from?” I asked.

“It was created from the very breath of God, from Whom comes all life and being. Having that origin, we are like God Himself, immortal until God withdraws His breath.”

“That is pretty heady stuff. It gives me a much greater appreciation of humans than I had before.”

Elatia explained, “If you think of the mass of humanity as sharing in and being descendent from one original body in Adam, and since Jesus came and became part of that same body, and died for us and then rose

¹⁶ **Revelation 22:2**, 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.

again, we also have hope that through Him Who conquered death, we too might rise again in Him.”

“Is there any hope for those who go down, or does their punishment go on forever?”

“Mercy and grace are given by God, and He gives it even in Hell. God is love, and His Spirit is love. And where iniquity abounds, His love much more abounds. A verse that I am claiming on this mission is **Isaiah 49:9: ‘That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.’”**

We had at last reached the entrance to the bridge. It was a walking bridge, built of sturdy construction and able to take heavy traffic. It provided a way over the very large and very deep crevasse which seemed to form a natural border around this Paradise, thus separating this region from Hell itself.

Commenting on the bridge, Elatia said, “This is the bridge of Hope Eternal. Those who have faith in the Lamb may cross it, the crevasse surrounds Paradise and prevents all access to this island-like retreat, other than by the bridge. Presently it is guarded by a cherub and a pair of guerlions. Don’t be afraid. They look frightening but they will not hurt you. Come let us cross.”

4. The Border Guards of Paradise

Standing at the entrance to the bridge was what I presumed to be the cherub, a large angel, the like of which I could not have imagined in my wildest dream. He stood at least three meters high, and had a most peculiar head that had four faces. The face of a lion seemed to be the one he was using at the moment, and when it roared and showed its teeth I felt weak inside, and he seemed to have a habit of roaring a lot. He held a huge sword in one hand.

"Geb shaheb Elatia servietus los Regalis! Nex im saut Travis! Passeria?"



Elatia spoke clearly and sharply in some strange language which she loosely translated for me. "I am Elatia. We seek refuge for the night. This is my companion Travis. We are on a mission for the King. May we enter?"

The answer did not come immediately, for the angel wished to inspect us first to see what exactly she was bringing into the Sanctuary. He moved closer until he was immediately beside me. His burning eyes penetrated to

the depth of my very soul, until I felt stripped naked before him, then he let us pass.

His deep voice, "Den paxum al um!" rumbled out his permission to pass in a language I did not understand, but the meaning was clear.

What a relief to be on the bridge to Paradise. As Buccopherous, who had seemed unmoved by the whole event, stepped boldly onto the bridge, I felt a shiver go through his body at the hollow sound his hooves made on the bridge. I glanced to my side. Far below I could see faces peering up at us from deep in the Earth. They seemed to be trapped within fiery enclaves, and in torment. The gap below us glowed red as though it flowed with lava.

"No need to be concerned," Elatia assured me again. "We won't fall in and this bridge is well guarded by the cherub, plus there are the guerlions."

"What is a guerlion?"

"A guerlion is something like a trained guard animal, but much more ferocious," was her succinct reply.

I had no sooner asked the question when to my horror two large catlike creatures came bounding toward us out of the foliage on the other side of the bridge. I have never in my life seen such fearsome creatures. They seemed to be a mix of every terrifying carnivore on Earth—terrible eyes and teeth and claws and manes. The horse snorted at them, his huge eyes widening and muscles tensed.

"Will they attack us?" I asked nervously.

"No, we have permission to enter," Elatia said, as I sat in silent dread and uncertainty behind her, wondering if we were about to be eaten on the spot by these domesticated wildcat creatures that now slinked along silently. They did not attack us, but rather loped along behind us like pet dogs.

On the far end of the bridge were two large brass doors that opened as we approached. The guerlions came beside us and took up positions as though they were now our personal guard dogs against any and all would-be intruders that might attempt an attack.

At last we entered the “Paradise” or the “Sanctuary” as this place was called. The beauty of the grounds was breathtaking: the trees laden with fruits of all kinds, and there were warm steaming fountains, with pools of fresh and crystal clean inviting water. I just wanted to get into one and wash away the coating dust that I was covered in from the sandstorm. Birds more colorful than peacocks could be seen everywhere. It really was a paradise in the middle of Hell. In the distance I could see the most exquisite *dwellings formed of gleaming white marble. I was amazed that there was a bright, beautiful sun in the sky that lit the entire scene. I had always pictured Hell as a place in perpetual darkness and dankness, and lots of brimstone burning away in an underground world of terrors. Not so!

We entered into a huge, warmly lit courtyard filled with happy people. A tall gentleman with steel gray hair and gray eyes came and took Buccopherous’ bridle, and without saying a word, led him away to a nearby stable for water and feed.

Elatia pulled off her hood and let her long, wavy hair fall down around her shoulders. She was beautiful, no longer a soldier on the battlefield but a very attractive young woman, with eyes that embraced my very soul with every glance. She came over and took my hand warmly, and led me into the grounds. Her life on earth had been cut short, but that was just the beginning of her life in the spirit. I longed to know more about her.

As we walked past a thick grove of flowering plants, the rich pleasant smell they emitted began to affect me. It was like I was absorbing the most delightful and intoxicating of substances that I had ever encountered. It left me feeling affectionate and at peace all over. I called out to my

beautiful companion that I was experiencing this drug-like effect. “Oh,” she said, “You must be extra sensitive to the flowers of that aphrodisia plant. Don’t worry, the effect is only temporary.”

“I don’t mind the effect, in fact I never want it to stop.” By now my eyesight had become blurry and I was having a difficult time walking in a straight line. “You don’t suppose that I could take a few seeds from that plant back home with me do you?”

“No, I’m afraid that would not be permitted,” Elatia said, smiling warmly at me as she steadied me with her arm. “Although it doesn’t seem to be too bad an idea to give a whiff of this plant to a few of the people in your world. They really seem to need it.”

We both laughed, and continued our walk.

5. Land of the Living Dead

"This is Paradise, a place of peace. Here is where worthy souls come, and those who did well for others but who have yet to learn about Jesus. Here they find relaxation and community, and can learn much from each other and through reflecting on their lives."

A sudden cold chill rippled through me. "Are these people all dead?" My mind conjured up pictures of bodies with parts missing, but nowhere could I see a person with a misshaped or mutilated decaying body as represented in horror movie stereotypes of ghouls and the living dead. They all looked perfectly normal.

Elatia looked calmly into my eyes, "By your standards I would have to say, yes. Those here are what you call 'dead,' but" She paused, turned again, looked at me, and with laughter in her eyes continued, "Then again, so am I."

"I suppose in a sense that I'm dead too! But we're so real, not like ghosts at all!"

"I never really thought of myself that way," she shrugged. "Yes, I guess I am dead"

"I feel too real to be a ghost!"

Elatia burst out laughing. Usually guarded and careful in her replies to my narrow views of her reality, she openly laughed. It was not a mocking kind of laugh, it was a full-bodied loving laugh of a person thoroughly enjoying something funny after a tense time. She quickly recovered her composure, clearly not wishing to make me feel uncomfortable for my apparent preconceived notions about the bodies that spirits have.

I realized how silly I must have sounded to her. She was a spirit and I was a spirit or in some form of a spirit body, traveling in a spirit world. I should not have acted so shocked and surprised that the people around

me were also detached from their physical bodies—only they were permanently detached!

"Can I be killed here? Since I am not quite dead yet."

"Yes, you can," came her reply. "So try to stay alive unless you want to be found dead in your lonely apartment from unknown causes. Your spirit would survive a big scare or a shock to your system, but your body might not, so you have to be more prayerful and careful here."

"Where I come from we think of spirits and ghosts as these wispy sort of things that appear and disappear and seem to have no substance. But here everything and everyone seems so real. You seem very real. My body seems more real than it did on Earth. I feel the warmth of the day and the coolness of the shadows. I have stronger emotions. But how can I be real or feel real without a real body?"

"This world you have entered is just as real as your physical one. It has definite form and structure, and conforms to set laws of existence. There are dimensions higher up where the spirit is totally free from all matter, but at this level the spirit is still directly linked to the physical. Here the physical and spiritual dimensions of Earth interact with and affect each other directly. This world is like seeing life from the other side of a window, or touching the other end of a stick, they are bound together as one, but like clouds compared to icebergs, they can appear very different, though they are both made from water. As different as things can seem, however, everything is controlled by fixed rules of existence. This is not just some imaginary world formed out of magical mists and vapors. It is a real place, full of real things, and real people, going about their daily existence which is every bit as real here as life is back on Earth.

"It's true that souls are not really complete without their physical form, but this separation is only for a time. Sin and death have only destroyed the lesser part of our being—our physical body. But remember

that God is a spirit, and the angels are spirits, and God is not anything less for not having a physical body—although He does now have a physical body in the Person of His Son, Jesus.

“When God created man, He formed him perfectly, but man was still not alive until He breathed into him ‘the spirit of life’.¹⁷ It was the breath of God¹⁸ in man that actually gave him life. When a person dies, their body returns to dust, but the activating force in their body cannot die, for it is formed by the breath of God. His memories of life in a sense form his spiritual body, with all the bodily functions of the physical man, and he is able to operate in the spirit world, just as angels and other spirit beings do. According to the choices made in life, a man’s soul goes to his appropriate level of existence. Some beings end up in very unpleasant places, as we all would if it were not for the great love of God and Jesus Christ who atoned for our sins,¹⁹ and brought us light, and love, as a gift to us from the Father. Through faith in Jesus, a person is translated into the Kingdom of Heaven, and will one day be presented to God by Jesus in love. Then we will all become one in Him. And remember too, that Jesus didn’t just save our spirits, He also has become the resurrection and life of our bodies too,²⁰ and He will take us with Him to a place where we can become one with Him in body and spirit. And once that happens He will present us to

¹⁷ **Genesis 1:26** And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.

Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

¹⁸ **Job 33:4.** The spirit of God made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

¹⁹ **Acts 5:31** Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

²⁰ **John 11:25** Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

the Father along with all that is created, for He is Lord and master of Creation itself.”

“Wow! Someday you and I will be one in God.”

“Yes, we are living parts of Jesus’ body.”²¹ But that will take more time to actualize in reality though it is already accomplished by faith. Right now we must focus on the present and do what the Lord shows us.”

We walked over to one of the pools with a fountain in it. The water looked so inviting, I wanted to dive in. But as I was a stranger here, I felt I needed to follow the lead of my guide. Thankfully, I didn’t have long to wait before Elatia called me to come for a swim, to which I readily agreed. I undressed somewhat cautiously, looking around to see if anyone might be near and watching. There didn’t seem to be anyone.

The water was divine, and just the right temperature, and seemed to ripple with life and energy as I submerged myself in it. A sudden splash of water to my face let me know that my riding mate was in a playful mood. I immediately responded with a torrent of water splashing of my own. At last our splashing subsided, and I found myself in Elatia’s arms

The warmth of her presence and the profound beauty and tranquility, peace and love that emanated from her face and eyes drew me even closer to her. Then as I gazed into this mysterious girl from Heaven’s eyes, desiring more of her, I heard a whisper in my mind like that of an angel saying, “Wait and I will show you a better way!”

²¹ **Romans 8:19-21** For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

5. Love, Sweet Love

Then Elatia spoke in a soft voice, “In Heaven we show our strong feelings of love and desire for each other in a different way. Rather than engage each other physically we share our feeling more directly in the spirit. It is a more complete experience and is not so limiting. When we love someone in this way the Holy Spirit gives us overwhelming inner joy.

“In Heaven people can easily express their feelings of love, attraction, or appreciation to anyone they encounter, wherever and whenever they meet. There is no secrecy about it and no one ever feels hurt or left out because such exchanges take place in the spirit. These are consensual encounters, but others are free to watch and even participate in a love exchange. In essence it is God’s love and explains why Jesus said that in Heaven, people neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like the angels of God.”

“I would very much like to learn about this way!” I exclaimed. I have often in life met or seen someone that I felt an overwhelming feeling of love for and I wished that there was some way of transmitting my feelings toward them. Showing someone the joy of knowing Jesus was the hardest thing to convey, especially when I felt bound by all the social rules and expectations people have on earth.

I was looking down as I had these thoughts, but I could not help glancing up to behold her face. I felt a hot flushing sensation rushing through me. I glanced down quickly, then back again. Our eyes met and locked. I felt my whole body being drawn towards her as though being pulled into a great vortex of loving desire. My body throbbed and pulsed under the pounding passions of the moment like great waves crashing against my sea wall. As our lips touched, all sense of reason, religion, and resistance vanished. All barriers between us washed quickly away. I was

instantly intoxicated by the sweet liqueur of love. All fear and inhibition left me. Like combining energy into creating a divine art form, we gave ourselves to it totally, a ballet of pure pleasure performed before an entire orchestra of love.

She placed her hands on the sides of my head and they became electric, transmitting what she felt for me to my inner being. It was wonderful. It felt strange at first being entered by another being, but as I learned to relax I became confident that it was okay and that I would be fine. Like a melting ice cream bar under a heat lamp, I gradually let go and allowed my inner being to flow and embrace the warmth of her love, concern and respect for me. There are no words to describe how secure and appreciated she made me feel in those moments. The whole experience left me with such a feeling of peace and tranquility as I had never known.

We pulled some soft, juicy fruit from a nearby tree. As we ate I thought about how Adam and Eve had lived completely free and without inhibitions in a paradise similar to this.

“Elatia, are all the dead able to feel love in this way?”

“Well, firstly you have to understand the power and place that love has in our universe. Love, you must realize, is the most powerful force that there is. Love is the very essence of God.²² It is the foundation on which all things were built and continue to exist. Without love, all that is would not be. Love is the foundation of everything, and it is the only thing that keeps the world alive and going. Love actually has creative powers. Jesus came to show the world His Father’s love. Satan rejects love, because real love is too invasive, too intrusive and revealing. It is too open when anyone has

²² **I John 4:16** And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

things to hide, and for that reason Satan hated and rejected Jesus. But even death could not quell Jesus' love. He rose a victor over the forces opposed to love. All His miracles were done in love, His disciples were won in love, and His commandment to them was to 'love one another.'²³ So whatever is done in love, God's love, can never be wrong in the eyes of God. The Devil hates all that is love, and does what he can to twist and destroy the pure impulse of God that love produces."

"This mission we are on must be part of Jesus' plan to bring souls to Him in love."

"You've got it! Now let's see where we are going to sleep tonight. There is a guest cottage not far from here that they keep stocked and ready for visitors. Let's go and see if we like it.

I was pretty sure that I would.

²³ **John 13:34** A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. **John 17:21** That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

6. Hell's Kitchen

We dressed quickly and headed toward the nearest dwelling. As we walked, various animals, the likes of which I had not seen before, crossed our path. At one point the very dangerous looking guerlions chose to follow us. I was obviously nervous about our new-found pets until Elatia said reassuringly, “Don’t worry, they will not hurt you. In fact, they seem to have adopted us as friends. They make wonderfully affectionate pets, and protect anyone who serves God.”

Looking at the size of the beast’s fearsome canines added to a fear of the amount of damage this terrifying-looking creature could do to me, and made me very thankful to be on the Lord’s side at that moment.

After a short walk, we came to the first cottage. It was idyllic with trellises

entwined with passion fruit vines and grape vines heavy with ripe, plump clusters of golden grapes, window boxes overflowing with flowers, a cozy little yard to the side with a beautifully designed gazebo, and a marble fountain with exquisitely carved figurines playing in the water. And everywhere there were fruit trees and peacock-like birds with equally magnificent colorations. The house itself had a lovely solarium built for enjoying the warm sunshine that bathed the premises.





Inside, ancient books and scrolls lined one wall, and a fireplace was on the other wall with log-like material to burn. It seemed that when they were burning they burned completely, only giving off heat and warmth, without ashes. Tacked to a door was a large scroll written in some ancient language. I asked Elatia if she was able to read it. She said it was a greeting, and a blessing on anyone who used the house, a hope that the time they spent here would be profitable for their souls.

The kitchen was unique, and had many pots and pans made of gold. The value of them back in my world would be astronomical. But seeing the kitchen so well equipped inspired another series of questions.

“Do the dead have to eat? Their spirit bodies surely can’t starve to death.”

“They aren’t really dead. You just think of them that way because they have left your physical dimension, but the ‘dead’ as you called them, are

very much alive. And yes, **they do have the desire** to eat and drink. You must have read about the people in the desert eating manna which God said was angels' food, and don't forget that the rich man desired water when he was in the torment of Hell.²⁴ The Lord Himself spoke of having a wedding feast in Heaven. Also remember that the Tree of Life bears twelve kinds of fruit for the healing of the nations in the time to come. No, eating remains something that people will do for millenniums to come. Jesus told His disciples at the Last Supper that He would not drink wine again until He drank it with them in the Kingdom of God."²⁵

"But if they eat, surely they must at some point have to excrete."

"You only excrete what your body does not absorb. Heavenly food is entirely digestible, it's the best health food there is."

"What kind of food do spirits eat, and do they need to eat to give them strength?"

"Jesus told His disciples that He had food to eat that they 'knew not of' and that to do His Father's will was His food. King David said that his strength came from the Lord. **So the strength that a spirit has comes directly from God, something like plugging an electric appliance into a wall outlet, only in this case you are the appliance.**"

"Do all spirits have the same access to God's strength regardless of their spiritual condition?"

²² **Luke 16:22-24** And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

²⁵ **Luke 22:18** For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

“Yes, even the Devil draws his strength from God.²⁶ God is not selective about who He gives strength to, and He gives His strength to all be they good or bad. He prefers to teach people what is good and what bad behavior is by having them experience the consequences of their actions and see the kind of ‘fruit’ an activity bears. People see the results immediately of some things they do, for example if others are being hurt or helped by what they are doing, but with other activities it’s not so apparent what the ‘fruit’ will be. Some things take time to develop and for it to become apparent if actions are good or evil. **That is why God likes to wait until the ‘harvest’ to clearly show us the end result of the things we do.”**

“But how do Satan and the fallen ones get their strength, if they are not in His presence?”

“Angels were created of pure spirit,²⁷ and as such have the natural strength they were created with. The good angels have an advantage in that they draw a lot of their strength, nourishment, and beauty from being in the presence of the Lord. **Satan and his minions have not been cast out of the spiritual heavens yet, or at least not their access to the Lord and His strength. They are like parasites.** That is why once they occupy someone, they hate to leave him.²⁸ But they also draw some of their strength from the spirit in darkness, which is from Satan, the prince of darkness. Yet even

²⁶ **1 Chronicles 29:12** Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand *is* power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

²⁷ **Hebrews 1:7** And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.

²⁸ **Luke 11:24, 26** When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

the deep darkness in which the evil tries to hide itself was created by the Lord. ²⁹ Angels are not dependent on eating food, as people of the Earth are.”

“But surely the fallen angels wouldn’t survive long if God were to shut off His presence from them entirely?” ³⁰

“Yes, you are right about that! Of course!” Elatia replied. “But God has chosen to act and interact in the dimensions in which His creations dwell according to fixed limitations which in His great love and wisdom He has placed on Himself. So although He is able to do all things, He chooses not to, so that we can make choices and have a meaningful part to play in doing what is right to restore His Kingdom. It gives those He created an opportunity to have meaningful tasks to accomplish, and to learn to trust Him, that what He has provided is sufficient for them. Michael and the angels that remain faithful will eventually defeat their enemies. Satan and his followers will eventually be cast out of Heaven. ³¹ That will prove to be a major power cut for them all.”

²⁹ **Job 34:22** There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. **Psalms 104:20** Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth. **Daniel 2:22** He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

³⁰ **Isaiah 14:9**. [When Satan is brought down] Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. (**Isaiah 14:10**) All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us?

³¹ **Isaiah 14:12** How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! **Revelation 12:7-9** And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

“Wow! It seems like God has left an awful lot of work to others and only intercedes when necessary,” I added as the pieces of this great puzzle began to fall into place.

“That is why we get to go on this mission!” Elatia replied, then continued, “Concerning the weakening of Satan, Isaiah wrote, ‘Art thou also become weak as we? How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! ... Thou shalt be brought down to Hell. To the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon theeIs this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdom; ... thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people.’³²”

“From what Isaiah said, it sounds like Satan will have a serious put down and those in Hell will reproach him because of it. Satan, however, seems to exist in a class of his own compared to the average demon. It almost seems like he has a special relationship with God,” I commented.

“Well, he certainly was created to be special, and was perfect until the day he decided to exalt himself and try to be equal with God,” Elatia interjected. “He certainly tries to keep above the rabble. Look how He brought down an entire legion of demons that possessed a man of the Gadarenes. Jesus commanded the demons to leave the man, but they wanted to remain in that country. They were very sly, and pretended to be very respectful of Jesus, and while worshipping Him as the Son of God they begged Him to send them into a herd of pigs, and finally Jesus consented.”

“What were they hoping to gain by that?” I queried.

“You see, pig’s meat is considered unclean for a Jew to eat. So the demons thought they could get into anyone who ate the meat because it was a sin. Now Jesus had the power to take away the demons’ freedom

³² Isaiah 14:10-20

and bind them deep down in the ocean or down in the earth where they would not be able to trouble people again.”

“You make it sound like demons need some kind of physical vehicle or conductor to get around in,” I replied, a little surprised.

“Powerful spirits such as those of the fallen angels are not as dependent on material things, animals or people to house, host, or transport them, but weaker spirits, especially spirits that once had a body are very dependent on the physical.”

“Is it true that you can ‘pick up’ spirits from certain objects, activities, or attitudes?” I asked, my curiosity about the workings of the spirit world spilling over a bit.

“A rock, a stick, or a pool of water do not become spirit conductors until people think of them as special or spiritual and worship them. If someone believes that a rock is divine or sacred, and people begin to worship it, then spirits are drawn to that object. The spiritual desires and beliefs of people draw spirits. Conversely, a person who is already under the influence of a spirit may carve the rock or piece of wood into a representation of a certain kind of spirit. The object they make might then attract more people who are fascinated by that kind of spirit, and those people worshipful or attracted to that kind of spirit can ‘pick up’ a spirit from the object. God is generally against the creation of graven images and idols for this reason.³³ Anywhere that objects or situations get too much

³³ **Revelation 9:20-1** And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts. **Jeremiah 10:3-6** For the customs of the people *are* vain: for *one* cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They *are* upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be

'worship' from people, those objects or situations become conduits for spirits looking for spiritually compatible hosts."

"We also have 3-D movies, TV and music groups, with thousands of spiritual influences to choose from. My world is like a spirit shopping mall. Unfortunately there is more evil than good to choose from," adding my commentary to the discussion.

"Your world is under heavy attack, and some spiritual influences are very powerful and hard to shake off."

"Yes, Jesus told us that we may be able to cast away some demon from influencing us, by building up our spiritual strength through taking heed to the Word and praying, but He warned that demons will soon be trying to get back into our lives with the help of even stronger demons," I added, trying to make use of what scripture I knew.

"A lot of people just don't realize how much hand-to-hand combat and spiritual warfare is going on each day. All our talking about having to eat has made me hungry! I'll make a meal for us."

That being said, she found some grain in an earthen jar, and some oil. I was surprised that it appeared fresh, and was without any sign of spoiling.

"No," she said, seeming to follow my thoughts. "Food doesn't spoil in Paradise or need refrigeration as it does in your world, for the curse of God did not affect this place, for it is by nature the end of all curses. There are no harmful insects that carry bacteria here in Paradise, and the air and soil are kept pure by spirit beings that watch over it. Would you like a steak?"

"Yes," I replied a little shocked that meat was even on the menu. "But how can there be steak unless an animal has been killed?"

borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also *is it* in them to do good.

She went into the garden and picked a large, bumpy looking fruit from a tree, and returned and after removing the tough outer covering, sliced a couple of thick slices.

“Voilà! Steak!”

“But what does it taste like?”

“Whatever you want it to taste like. Its flavor comes from your mind. It is an all-purpose sort of food.”

In no time she had a wonderful meal prepared for us of fruit, a kind of bread-cake made from the meal in the jar, and steaks, fresh from the mysterious plant. She said the cake was the same kind that the angel fed to Elijah when he was weary and discouraged during his flight from Jezebel.³⁴

I ate like a starving man, and as I ate I felt wonderfully strengthened and refreshed. I knew eating this food was mainly a recreation and relaxation activity, but it had such a nice effect on me when shared with Elatia. I was glad that the Lord thought to include the pleasure of eating in the Kingdom of God to come. The Lord is so often represented as such an austere fellow, and it was wonderful to realize that He allowed His followers to have the joy and comfort of food .

I imagined that the foreboding world that lay just around Paradise had all sorts of -denigrating and devilish practices designed to rob one’s self and others of the few pleasures they might enjoy. I could see how lack of love, selfishness, and oppression were common denominators between

³⁴ **I Kings 19:5-8** And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

this world and mine—whereas love, kindness, generosity, and helping others, enjoying life in a godly fashion were like ladders leading up and out of Hell's domain.

7. An Evening in Paradise

Evening came over the land much as it does back on Earth, but I felt a whole lot better in Hell than I would have back on Earth. I say “back” because I have no other way of describing the relationship between where I came from and this place. As strange as it may seem, I now had a body, complete in every way as far as I could tell, and able to do much more. Yet at the same time, I was an old man lying somewhere in my room back in the physical state they call life. **What a joy it was to be with Elatia,** to be able to ask her my every question and get simple, straight answers. We walked outside and stood under the trellises, and gazed up at the stars. **“Is Heaven very far away?”** I asked.

She smiled and took my hand in hers, and said, **“Physically, yes, it’s a far distance, but in the spirit the door to Heaven is within you.** It’s only the distance of a thought from where you are. **Tomorrow we shall go through many tests, distractions, and devilish resistance, but just remember, if Jesus is in your heart, Heaven is always with you.** You only have to reach out and touch Him and you’re there.”

Elatia reminded me that tomorrow would be nothing like this day had been and that we would need all the strength we had. She said that I would probably be attacked the worst, since I was more vulnerable and impressionable as this world was so new to me, **that troubling spirits would play upon any doubts or fears that I had.**

I confessed that the gatekeeper with the spear had upset me by saying we would never leave here alive. I reminded her that I was not a young man in my prime, but really an old man who had never experienced death, and that I was concerned that the **sins of my youth will come up to condemn me.**

Elatia added, “The reason you find yourself concerned is because the Enemy is beginning to tempt you to doubt the power of salvation. Let us have a good prayer before facing who knows what. Dear Jesus, we ask You to go with us. Rebuke any spirits that try to stop or hinder us on the way. Give us wisdom in handling the different situations we will face. Give us Your words and help us to be successful in breaking the chain of lies the Enemy has on those souls who seek You. Lead and guide us by Your Holy Spirit.”

“The Bible says that the body without the spirit is dead.³⁵ But I assume that having a living physical body and spirit is better than being stuck here in Hell without the support of a physical body. There is an obvious advantage to just having a spiritual body, since angels seem to survive very well without physical bodies. It seems that through sin our earthly bodies for all intents and purposes are considered dead.”

“But, when we receive Jesus,” Elatia interjected, “God gives us a new spirit that when joined to a body will actually be greater than the angels.³⁶ In Jesus, God transforms us,³⁷ shares Himself with us in a special way, and we become living beings like Him.³⁸”

³⁵ **James 2:26** For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

³⁶ **1 Corinthians 6:3** Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? **Hebrews 1:4** [Jesus] Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. **1 John 3:2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

³⁷ **1 Corinthians 12:27** Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

³⁸ **2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

“Once you understand how things work here, you will see there is order, regularity, and predictability here, just as you have on the other side. Yes, spirits do have 'bodies' that do respond and conform to certain set rules that surround their existence. However, the spiritual laws of existence that govern spirits are quite different than those laws governing physical bodies.

“They don’t have physical bodies, but spiritual bodies that exist in the world of spiritual things. Spiritual bodies can see and hear and feel things in the spirit, similar to how physical bodies can in the physical. Spirits can think and move and communicate. They can feel things and they have desires. Spirits can pass through physical bodies and enter them.”

I was amazed how well I seemed to know Elatia already from our first exchange. Gazing into her warm, responsive eyes, I queried. "What is your story? How do you come to be on this quest? Tell me your story."

8. Elatia

"I was born in a mountainous region of Greece in a small cottage near a majestic forest. The forest is still there, and sometimes I walk through the pines, oaks and other trees and relax beneath this one particularly tall tree that reaches up to heaven. Sometimes, I climb up on an outcropping rock just to watch the sun go down. That was my homeland. Elateia is a name that goes back to the time of the gods and is the name given to that area."

"The time of the gods? The gods of Greece? Were they real?" I asked, somewhat surprised.

"Yes, in a way they were. Some truth often lies buried beneath the tangle of legend and mythology. Usually though, all that remains is the empty shell of some demon's version of events. In the days before the great Flood certain 'gods' did come down from Heaven and dwell among the people of Earth. My homeland of Greece was one of the original locations where they lived and produced their outstanding offspring."

"You must tell me the story!"

"Greek mythology records that monstrous giants called Gigantes once roamed the Earth, and that they were created when the blood of a god fell to Earth. That legend is left to us by real events. You see, the angels didn't all fall at one time, some of them were seduced and slipped away more subtly. There was a group of talented angels that desired to experience life on Earth. They also wanted to be worshipped as gods by men and to have their own wives and children. They intended to corrupt Adam's bloodline so that humans would become a mixed race. Their cohabitation with the women of Earth didn't produce the super race they expected. The offspring that resulted from this celestial **cross breeding were quite incredible, and some of their children became mighty men and men of**

renown.³⁹ However their many talents and powers proved to be the cause of their downfall. Being superior is all right if you use your abilities for good, but unfortunately they began misusing them.

“God warned them that mixing their genes with humans was not a good idea because of the fact that humans were limited beings made of flesh and blood, and would only live for a limited time. If we’re to believe old accounts, it seems that the life span of these amazing creatures was quite short and they aged quickly. They developed strange eating disorders and became insanely violent, wreaking havoc in the earth. The world was given over to demon worship, cannibalism, human sacrifice, robbery, murder, and violence. They finally ended up killing each other in terrible battles. Enoch, a prophet of old, foretold their violent end and punishment for having polluted humanity by teaching them dark arts and other terrible practices.⁴⁰

“Noah also tried to persuade them to change. He was afraid that they would kill him, and fled from their lands with his wife and children.⁴¹ Perhaps he brought his father Lamech and grandfather Methuselah with him to a place away from ‘civilization’ perhaps to where there were great forests and wild animals.”

“Their original plan to produce a super race on earth seemed good to begin with, but it failed because it was not God’s way. Did Lucifer have anything to do with their corruption?” I asked.

³⁹ **Genesis 6:4** There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

⁴⁰ **The Book of Enoch chapters 15-20**

⁴¹ **Josephus: Antiquities 1:73,74**

“Perhaps. Lucifer himself fell from Heaven like lightning, as Jesus described.⁴² He and his angels fell before the creation of the world, so he was around. He was there at the very beginning, trying to hinder Jesus and the Holy Spirit, but during the creation he lost a lot of his forces and had to be more subtle from then on. Many of his followers were bound in the Earth,⁴³ and others were cast into darkness.⁴⁴ It was then that God created the lake of fire, which is the second death, to serve as a warning to the Devil and his angels and anyone that chose to follow in their evil ways.⁴⁵

“But He hasn’t cast anyone into the lake of fire yet, has He?

“No, He hasn’t. But it remains a warning to the Devil and his followers of their final fate if they continue on in their evil ways. Two-thirds of the angels in Heaven remained faithful to God and His Son.⁴⁶

“Angels like that big Cherub at the entrance remained loyal and fought against Satan. It was a time of terrible testing for angels. The battles were hot and pitched. Taunting condemnation and accusations rained down upon those faithful ones who were not accustomed to the ways of war and having to face their former companions, who were intoxicated with the spirit of rebellion and defiance. Many of those falling angels collapsed

⁴² **Luke 10:18** And he [Jesus] said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

⁴³ **Revelation 9: 14** Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

⁴⁴ **2 Peter 2:4** For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; **Jude 1:6** And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

⁴⁵ **Matthew 25:41** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

⁴⁶ Archangels Michael, Uriel, Raphael, Gabriel, Saragael, Remiel, Phanuel and others such as the Seraphim, the Cherubi and the Ophanin are mentioned in the Book of Enoch.

inwardly because of their self-love, and having worshipped the creature, Lucifer, more than the Creator.”

“Yet God allowed Lucifer back into Heaven?”

“Yes, He allowed him back, and in time Satan became bold enough to accuse all good people in an attempt to prevent anyone from escaping his power over them because of sin.⁴⁷ He started to blame, criticize, and condemn everything and everyone he could. That’s when He became the Devil, Satan, the Accuser of the Saints, the serpent in the Garden of Eden, and the dragon of Revelation. He still can go before the throne of God the Father, but he’s much more cautious now, having lost a few rounds.”

“How does he view Jesus? Since Jesus was instrumental in bringing him into being.”

“He totally hates Jesus. He feels that Jesus is only a son of God like himself, and being a son, is less than the Father and more his equal. God certainly had to hide a lot about Jesus from everyone.⁴⁸ But Jesus, as has been revealed, is the Word of God, by Whom all things were made.⁴⁹ And

⁴⁷ **Revelation 12:10** And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

⁴⁸ **Romans 16: 25** Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began. **Mark 9: 7,8** And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves. **Colossians 1: 26** Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: **John 17: 5.** And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

⁴⁹ **Colossians 1: 16** For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

it will be Jesus that brings Satan down. There is still a great mystery surrounding Jesus that only God the Father knows. But when He was on Earth, His Father said, 'Behold, this is my Son. Hear Him,'⁵⁰ so as the Word of God had become flesh, Satan thought he might be able to snare Him or stop Him some way, but couldn't."⁵¹

"How could Satan have missed the fact that the person he was dealing with was the Creator of all life?"

"He just could not believe that God would appear in such a humble form as Jesus."⁵² He may have suspected that there was more to Jesus than appeared on Earth, but he didn't seem to recognize Him. Although some demons did recognize Him, however, and Jesus had to command them to be quiet."⁵³

I marveled at how Elatia seemed to know so much and yet never seemed to let it affect her humble straightforward answers. She never let her vast knowledge, experience and spiritual gifts color her behavior in anyway. She was pure and innocent, free of those imperfections that the teachers back on earth were prone to manifest when they possessed a little more knowledge about something than their students.

⁵⁰ **Hebrews 1:5** For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? **Matthew 17:5** While he yet spake, behold, 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.

⁵¹ **Mark 1:13** And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of tan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

⁵² **Corinthians 2: 7,8** But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

⁵³ **Mark 1:24** [The demons He cast out said] ... Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

"So what happened to you? How were you killed?"

"Well, you see, Satan, the king of earthly empires, put it into the heart of King Philip of Macedon to want to rule all of Greece. He was not strong enough to conquer everyone, especially the Athenians, so he made many alliances and peace agreements among the rulers of Hellas. And he made a great promise of peace with the Athenians, even while he was building up the army he would suddenly attack them with. Then, when he thought the Athenians were at peace and least prepared for war, and had believed him and trusted him, he suddenly marched his army forth to conquer them.

The small Phoenician town of Elateia commanded the entranceway to the mountain pass he needed to march through, in order to attack the Athenians. I was just a teen at the time. We wanted peace, not war, but since we were friendly with the Athenians, we had to fight. King Philip thought he could just march right through us with his army. He was wrong. We were totally outnumbered, and mostly just simple mountain people, but we controlled the high ground. We held the army at bay as long as we could, but finally Elateia was taken. Now King Philip did not want the Athenians to learn of his plan to attack them. He wanted to take them completely by surprise.

A few wild younger warriors managed to slip through the lines of our enemy and hurry ahead and warn the Athenians. One young, impulsive, fiery-tempered girl helped them make it through the lines, but it cost her life. I was that girl. My brother pleaded with me not to go with them, but I was determined. After an exhausting journey, we finally reached Athens. It was the middle of the night. We just started yelling and waking everyone to warn them.

"Citizens, awake! Soldiers, prepare yourselves! The Macedonians are coming! King Philip is marching on Attica! Elateia is captured!" Some

people didn't believe us. They told us to stop drinking, shut up and let them go back to sleep. But we kept it up until we roused the whole city.

"But when I was returning to Elateia after warning the city, I was set upon by some of King Phillip's soldiers, who killed me for revealing their plans. They raped me and beat me to death and left my body in the forest.

"My brother, later found my body and buried it in a quiet place by some very tall trees."

"So what happened to you then?"

"We were not believers yet in the one God who loved us. We worshipped the gods of the Greeks. We even made pilgrimages to the ancient temple of Delphi to hear the oracle speak. My parents were religious people. I can still remember my father praying that Hermes would not take my soul down into the dark regions of the Earth but that for my courage I be taken to dwell in the Elysian Fields, the place where we were taught that the souls of great men and women go after death."

"So did Hermes come for you?"

"No, he didn't. The gods of Greece are not literal beings. For the most part they are composite characters made up of a few fragments of reality mixed with a lot of fantasy and folklore. Hermes was supposed to be a messenger of the gods. He sounds a bit like the angel Gabriel, but in character he was more like a fallen angel who was the messenger of Satan. Hermes was not just a messenger, but he was also the god of thieves, a cunning, deceitful, greedy fellow. He was the father of Pan, a half-goat, half-man creature, and Hermaphrodites a fellow who was so in love with himself that he became both a man and a woman.

"So no, it was not the deceitful Hermes that came for me, but a kind angel that came and brought me to this wonderful place they call Paradise. It is a place where the souls of the imperfect, the sometimes disobedient, are taken to reflect on life and learn from it. When I came, there were

many souls here who lived before and after the Flood. I met Adam and Eve and Abraham. They were all very kind to me and taught me about the Lord, and told me about His promise to someday come and save them. Then, when Jesus came and preached to us, I just knew He was the Promised One, the Savior of the world. Some were a little uncertain at first, but I didn't have any doubts, and convinced many others to believe in Him. And when He began His triumphal march, I was right there with Him."

When Elatia had finished her account of being a teen warrior and fighter I commented, "Wow! You have lived a very full life. You should be the patron saint of all teens who struggle against oppressors." Elatia just laughed and gave all the glory to the God of Love for saving her and letting her go on this mission.

9. Oppression

When I awoke the next morning, Elatia was standing at a window looking out. I arose and embraced her. It was a warm moment of love.

Then, since we were starting out a little late in the morning, we had to hurry to get our preparations for the day done. Elatia took a good supply of food and water for our journey and we ate our breakfast on horseback to save time. We crossed back across the bridge and bid goodbye to our heaven on earth. The sandstorm that had been such a barrier to us upon entering appeared to be gone, at least in the spot we needed to cross. However, after we had journeyed quite a distance, I looked back and I could see a billowing wall of sand again. Before us lay a vast wasteland. Elatia called it the Valley of Baca. She warned me that in this region we had to be especially on our guard against mental attacks, because many displaced demons wandered through this zone to ponder and scheme.

I don't know when I started to notice the first signs of an attack on me. It all began so casually like just a part of my inner thoughts. I began to feel a little resentment towards Elatia. *Why was I chosen to accompany her into this dimension? Was it because I was weaker and would submit to her authority? She just seemed to assume the "alpha" role without question. What if she was just stringing me along with details about this place that weren't necessarily true, but told me in order to keep me conveniently concerned and subservient to her.* All the while I was slipping more and more into a negative mindset and feeling increasingly alienated and separated from Elatia. Our unity was definitely eroding.

Elatia asked how I was doing and my answer was a little short and clipped, feeling that she was continuing to patronize me. Elatia picked up on my mood shift and became more intense with her questioning.

“Are you alright, Travis? You haven’t said anything for several minutes, and I am worried that you may be starting to have your first mind battles.”

I was ashamed to admit that I had been thinking negative thoughts, and my mind flashed with a sense of guilt, fear and panic. *“No! Don’t tell her the truth! Cover up! Hide your feelings. If you tell her the truth she may send you back. And you wouldn’t want that, would you?”*

“Oh ... I’m alright ... just thinking about all that has happened. That’s all.”

I tried to speak with more confidence in my voice so she would not pick up on my eroding attitude. But I knew that was wrong, and now her questions helped awaken me to the attempts to negatively influence me spiritually. I realized I needed to actively resist this line of thinking.

“You are right about the mind battles. I am having one right now,” I confessed to her.

“Challenge it! Rebuke it in the name of Jesus!” Elatia replied.

So I began rebuking the spirit. “I rebuke you slimy spirit, in the name of Jesus, and command you to depart and trouble me no more.” As the demon was forced to let go of his influence on my mind, I could imagine seeing him being cast back into the desert again.

“Wow! I feel a great weight being lifted off my heart, and I see how I was allowing my mind to slowly slip silently on to a wrong channel.”

“What thoughts did he use to try and capture you with?” Elatia asked, obviously prying.

“I am embarrassed to say. I guess I was getting a little proud of myself for going on this mission. And then I started to feel a little resentful that I am in second place on this team.”

“I’m sorry,” said Elatia. “Please forgive me if I have made you feel that way. To clear your spirit, just ask Jesus for forgiveness. It is amazing that

you came out of it so quickly. You must have experienced something like this before, and are somewhat wise to the Devil's devices."

"Yes, when I was just a young man and newly saved, they nearly got me like that. But, thank the Lord, someone else was watching out for my soul and prayed that I would not become sifted like wheat⁵⁴ in the grasp of such deceivers."

"Well, that's an example of 'all things working together for your good,' because you have been called by the Lord."⁵⁵

"Elatia, can I ask you another question now? How is it that some spirits are free to move around and oppress and possess people, while others are bound up in certain places?"

"There are different classes of demons at work. Some are very clever at deceiving humans and knowing just what weakness to appeal to, to get them trapped and under condemnation. When certain angels fell, they became demons with various abilities according to their former anointing, the Devil being the principle demon of them all. Before their fall, many of them were equipped to serve mankind and guide his thoughts aright. So these are the most adept at seducing and leading people away from God and good. But many of the souls in Hell are not in torment like the fellow who withheld good from Lazarus,⁵⁶ but are lost, wandering souls, without

⁵⁴ **Luke 22:31,32** And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

⁵⁵ **Romans 8:28** And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

⁵⁶ **Luke 16:19-31** [Jesus recounts the story of Lazarus and the rich man.] There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died,

a purpose or a place.⁵⁷ Some of these turn very evil and devilish and possess people. Some of these spirits have the ability to foresee things in the future. The girl who followed St. Paul around is an example of that.⁵⁸ Suffice it to say, there are as many different kinds of spirits as there are people, and they each end up in the place that is best for them, and I would say, with the most chance for them to repent and call out to Jesus for forgiveness.”

A very much more humble and yielded creature was I with Elatia now, having fallen prey to the Enemy’s devices so quickly. To Elatia, my battle was just part of the price of being there and was quickly forgotten. There was no time for thinking about it, as we still faced the long hot stretch of

and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame) But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment) Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them) And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

⁵⁷ **Psalm 63:9** But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.

⁵⁸ **Acts 16:16-18** And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation) And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

sandy wasteland between us and the city of Gragau, which Elatia said was our destination.

“These are the wastelands or dry places that Jesus spoke of where spirits come to wander and think about what evil they will do or what person they will possess next.⁵⁹ I am not surprised that you encountered one so quickly out here.”

“Why is it that some are bound in the rocks, while others are allowed to roam free?” I asked.

“Each spirit has lessons to learn, though some never learn. When the final judgment comes, they will be judged according to the works that they have done in the course of their existence. So this is sort of a proving ground for them.” She paused and pointed off in the distance to some ridges. “Our destination is over there by those ridges. We must cross these plains of Baca before nightfall.”

"Why, what happens at nightfall?"

"You don't want to know or be out here then. Too many crazies emerge. We must travel while it is day. Come, we must go now. It's getting late and we still have a lot of ground to cover before this day is done."

"It seems a long way to go. Can this horse make it, carrying both of us?"

“Yes, but it will be very tiring. Wait, I have an interesting thought.” Having said that, she leaned over and appeared to speak to her horse, who then let out a loud whinny. To my surprise, in the far distance from among

⁵⁹ **Matthew 12:43-45** When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

the rocky formations where we had emerged and encountered the gatekeeper, came an answering neigh.”

"It sounds like there is another horse there!" I said in surprise.

10. The Lord Hath Need⁶⁰

Elatia was talking about the attack on us by the gatekeeper: "If he came from the city, then I assume that he came by horse. Lesser spirits seem to need a way of travelling unless they travel totally by the spirit."

I realized that the creature that jumped us coming in was a guard, probably sent to wait and try to intercept us. "How could they know we were coming?" I asked, a bit alarmed that the enemy was already on to us.

"Oh, there is always someone watching the thoughts and intents of the heart and monitoring things in your dimension. They want to see if there might be some way to use it against us," was her reply.

Elatia turned Buccopherous in the direction of the sound. Sure enough, we soon discovered a small niche carved in the rocks where a horse was tied beside a pool of water. Elatia rode over to the animal, undid its lines and said, "Here's your transportation to Gragau! All you need to do is pray over it and ride quickly away!"

My shocked surprise was evident. Here she was stealing a horse probably belonging to the wretched creature that she had just knocked down the rocky embankment, who could be hurt and who would now be stranded way out here in the wilderness.

"Is it alright to just take his horse like this?" I questioned.

⁶⁰ Mark 11:2-7. Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him. And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither. And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.)

"I don't think you quite get the situation we are in here. We are at war. This is enemy territory. That creature back there has already died once, so it cannot really die again until the second death, which won't happen for some time. He will probably keep trying to follow and hunt us down as long as we are in this region. That's his job. The best we can hope for is to be able to slow him down a bit, so we can complete our mission and get out of here. Hurry up! Get on this horse and let's get out of here, now!"

"But isn't this horse from here? I mean, it was once alive and is now dead."

"Yes, it was probably killed in one of your crazy wars along with the man who rode it. Who just may have been the guy trying to stop us. But here in the spirit world, it's as real as the day it was born. Now stop protesting and get on."

Without further objection I jumped over onto the other horse. Elatia handed me the reins. Then, before letting her horse have a drink, she took her sword and plunged it into the water. It bubbled violently. "Just a precaution," she said. "Most of the water in this region is cursed, and would only make one thirstier."

A dark figure moving toward us suddenly caught my eye and I yelled, "You're right! Here he comes! Let's go!" We turned the horses around and raced off into the desert. A horrible shriek of hate and fury echoed from the rocks behind as we galloped away.

Racing full speed across the open plain was exhilarating. After what seemed a long run at an incredible speed, Elatia slowed Buccopherous to a trot and then a walk, and my horse fell in beside hers.

"How is it that this horse ended up in Hell? Do animals have souls?"

"Animals are not the same as humans. That doesn't mean that they are of no interest to the Lord. They are very active in human life. Remember that it was a serpent that tempted Eve, and it was an ass that

saw the angel and tried to warn Balaam,⁶¹ and ravens brought food to Elisha.⁶² In the beginning God gave man rule over the animals.⁶³ They provide him with companionship, clothing, work, and food. Animals, in a sense, are extensions or additions to man's life on Earth and in the spirit. Some animals are very sensitive in the spirit and can see into the spirit world, especially those that have a meek and mild nature.⁶⁴ So animals

⁶¹ **Numbers 22:25-33** And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again. And the angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff.) And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee. And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay. Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face. And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me: And the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive.

⁶² **1Kings 17:3-7** Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.⁴ And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that *is* before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

⁶³ **Genesis 1:26** And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

⁶⁴ **Ezekiel 38:20** So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that *are* upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.

that we get close to share our sensitivity to the spirit world. Because of these spiritual ties that animals develop with humans, some of them are brought into the spirit world. Some people even keep the pets they had in life with them when they die. But those animals that are wild beasts or demon possessed return to the earth from which they were formed, and exist in the memory of God — who must give His permission even for a sparrow to die.”⁶⁵

“There may be some hope for my landlady and her cats yet!” I exclaimed, and Elatia looked at me questioningly.

“My landlady back on Earth keeps a lot of cats,” I said, in order to explain. “To her, the Earth is just a lifeless utility to be used or abused as people wish, and she treats humans about the same way.”

“That’s too bad! Because the Earth has a spirit and a kind of consciousness that has feelings. The body of man is directly linked to the physical Earth, and the spirit of man is linked to God and the spiritual dimension of the Earth. The Earth belongs to the Lord and He cares what we do to it.”⁶⁶ And remember that in the Endtime the earth helps keep God’s children from the lies of Satan.⁶⁷

“I know that this Hellish world is somehow connected to my world, but I can’t see any real ways that they are joined.”

“Actually, Hell is an extension of your world.”

⁶⁵ **Matthew 10:29** Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will. (NKJ)

⁶⁶ **Revelation 11:18** The nations were in uproar and now the time has come for your retribution, and for the dead to be judged, and for your servants the prophets, for the saints and for those who fear your name, small and great alike, to be rewarded. The time has come to destroy those who are destroying the earth. (NJB)

⁶⁷ **Revelation 12:16** And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

"But I don't see anything too familiar. All I see is this desert-like plain, but I don't see anything like my home city."

"It's here if you know how to look. Right now we are looking at a different aspect of its existence. You might say we are seeing a more spiritual representation of your world, a physical manifestation of the condition of things in your world."

"A rough and rocky desert place—no buildings, no streets, no people? I don't get it."

"This world's wasteland is a direct result of the spiritual conditions on Earth."

"Well, judging by this harsh terrain, the place where I live is not doing too well spiritually."

"The city you live in on Earth is not beautiful, but actually is descending into spiritual darkness. Parts of it are literally turning into a spiritual hell, a prison house for the spirits that lived their earthly lives there. Some parts are deteriorating more quickly than others, depending upon the people who now live there. People have the power to lift or lower the spiritual level of a place. This is also true of parts of the nation you live in."

Suddenly a shiny object streaked overhead. It wasn't like any airplane I was familiar with on Earth. "What was that thing?"

"You would call it a UFO," Elatia replied with a twinkle in her eyes. "Only they are not so 'unidentified' here. It's probably involved in reconnaissance, or troop movement, or flying in some big wig 'up topper', or it may be just keeping an eye on us. Something must be going on."

"Spacecraft? Here? But why use horses when they have technology like that?"

"There are big class differences down here. The principalities and powers that rule here like to show how superior and advanced they are, to give the impression that they are invulnerable, all-powerful, and godlike."

They use equipment like that for all sorts of things. Often they use them for transporting vulnerables like yourself to and from Hell and farther up in the spirit world."

"Can they fly those things right into my world's dimension?"

"If conditions are right. Sometimes aircraft and other objects from your world get caught in the interdimensional voids that form in the passageways between the two dimensions. But passing from a deeply physical dimension into a more spiritual one is something like what a fish experiences when coming out of water."

Elatia somehow seemed to be aware of all the changes in technology back on earth. Yet here she was just a girl on a horse crossing a desert in the heart of Hell dressed in a cowl engaged in a undertaking that required a significant amount of faith. I wondered if I would ever get to actually see her as she really was.

"So now I'm a fish out of water, am I?" I said jovially and we both laughed.

"Imagine that you are a little sea creature that lives inside a sea shell, and you get washed up on a beach. As you wind your way out of the shell, you leave the world you know and enter a different dimension, a very different world, full of light and air."

"Let me see if I'm getting this right. You are saying that my world is something like living in a sea shell on the ocean floor, but that now I have been washed on up into a world of light and air and land creatures. So, coming out of my shell would be comparable to dying and emerging on some special part of a beach to which I have been assigned."

"You're getting the idea, but don't strain your brain trying to figure it all out just yet. For the moment, tune into this present reality, because this is where our assignment is."

Elatia reached over and placed her small but strong hand over my eyes. I began to see odd building-like shapes forming around and below me. It was not the sky line of my city I saw, but rather the reverse of my city. It was as though I was seeing some kind of three-dimensional reflection where everything seemed sort of upside down, inside out and backwards. The tall buildings seemed to point downward and seemed reversed or somehow sort of inside out. It was very confusing to my mind.

I pulled away and opened my eyes. "That made me sort of seasick. I feel quite dizzy and confused. That was like walking into a reflection of my world, where everything up is down, outside is inside and backward is forward. My brain can't handle looking at things that way just yet. I'm dyslexic enough as is." We laughed.

"It's hard at first but you quickly adjust. In a way, that's how much of this place looks to those of your world. Some places do appear quite normal still, but in those places where heavy spiritual reversal is in progress, confusion reigns.

"You are a tridimensionalist—that's what we call a person who has seen all three dimensions: the earthly, the heavenly, and this hellish one. Many parts of your city are undergoing heavy spiritual reversal, so there is a lot of dimensional warping going on."

"Things look pretty normal here."

"That only indicates how bad it has become. Just like on Earth, this place is totally different from what it used to be. But since you never saw it before, you think this is the way it is supposed to be."

"Well, one thing I did notice about life in my city is that values have been twisted in the spirit. What you think is up is really down. When you think you are working your way up in the world you are often actually digging your way down spiritually."

"Yes, the high places of the proud and powerful, the lofty positions and penthouse apartments in your world are not actually closer to God in spirit, but reach down in the opposite direction and are closer to the god of this world, the Prince of the Air as he is called. He loves high places, but since he can't be up there with God any more, he has caused this reverse world to seem for now to be the real world. Here he can appear to be the highest and greatest when really he is the lowest. To be where he is you must go down and away from God.

"Once sin and Satan entered the world, so many things got mixed up and reversed. Honesty, humility, and simplicity were soon replaced by deceitfulness and duplicity."

11. Satan's War for World Domination⁶⁸

"Why is Satan called the Prince of the Power of the Air? I thought he liked creeping down and around in all the dark places on Earth."

"Wrong! More than anything he likes to be high up and above everyone else. Don't forget he wanted to be right up there in place of God.⁶⁹ Where did he take Jesus to tempt him?"

"Way up on top of the temple in Jerusalem, and then way up on top of a mountain."⁷⁰

"Right! He loves those high places way above it all. Those seats of honor in the upper rooms. But step by step he is being forced down to the ground, lower and lower he is being driven down each day, and it's killing him. He is king over all the children of pride.⁷¹ He loves to establish himself and his kingdom in high places, and among the rich and powerful of the Earth, where he can control the most people. Ultimately he wants to control everything and everyone. He mistook God's assigning of significant duties and responsibilities to His creations as a sign of God's weakness and not His love and transcendent power and majesty."

⁶⁸ **Ephesians 2:2-3** 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: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past ... and were by nature the children of wrath

⁶⁹ **Isaiah 14:13-15** For thou [Satan] hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

⁷⁰ **Matthew 4:5, 8** Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.

⁷¹ **Job 41:34** He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride.

"Delusional!—He really thinks he can be a god, at least one equal to God. Does he know about everything like God knows?"

"No, he doesn't. Thank God, he's not omniscient, but he is very clever."

We were slowly working our way across this particularly barren part of the desert, when the rather somnambulistic rhythm of the horses' hooves clopping on the hard surface below was suddenly interrupted by a shriek like that of a banshee being tortured. The horse I was on shied and reared up as though trying to avoid some as yet unseen horror from the deep.

A deep, rasping voice from somewhere in the bowels of Hell thundered out an ominous warning. I lost my hold and was tossed to the ground. "Turn back! Oh foolish humans! Know that what you seek to do here is impossible. Your presence is known to us. You will not succeed. Turn back while you still can."

Cracks formed in the dry surface, and smoke and vapors began to rise from them. I breathed in a bit of the acrid smoke and began to choke. I then began to hallucinate and see souls in torment before me. The vision was so terrible I could not bear to see them. Then all of my senses began to shut down one by one, until I was left alone inside my head, a prisoner trapped in a world of total darkness. A horror of death and despair crossed over me like a dark cloud blocking out the sun. I had never felt so alone and helpless in all my life. But I was not alone, for from within came a spark of reassurance that gave me strength and hope in the face of such hopelessness, and a light in so dark a place. I focused my attention on the light and the darkness began to recede. Gradually my senses returned and I could hear sound again, and opened my eyes to Elatia's radiant face smiling down at me.

"What was that? What happened to me?" I asked.

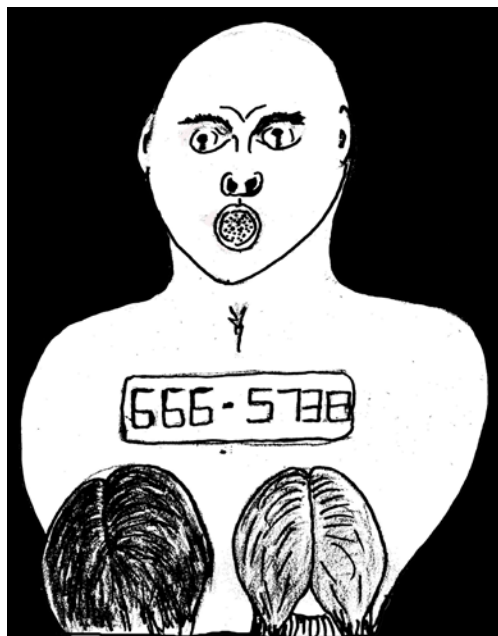
“You fell off your horse when you blacked out. That was the voice of one of the fallen ones trying to scare us away. He was hoping to replace your faith with fear. Fear is one of the greatest weapons they have in the war against our faith.”

After a quick prayer together to clear my head and to remove any traces of the greatly troubling experience that I had just gone through, we were off again.

“We will be passing by one of Satan’s military training facilities. Would you like to see it? We can get a peek at it if we are careful not to be seen. I wouldn’t normally chance jeopardizing our mission, but I think it’s important that you see it.”

Still a little shaken from my recent encounter with the dark forces at work in this world, I wanted to say “No,” but I was recovering quickly from my trauma and replied by faith, “Yes, I would like to see it.”

We rode on about an hour until we came to a long bluff with rather cliff-like sides. Finding a place in the steep wall where it was possible to climb up, we secured the horses to some large rocks and began a difficult climb, made more difficult by the fact that the soil was made mostly of sand, and crumbled when we touched it. At last, quite exhausted, we reached the upper edge and peered over. I was not prepared for the scene I beheld. Before me was a great plain with thousands upon thousands of souls. They had been organized into groups and were queuing up one group at a time to go before this huge statue. It was magnificently crafted and appeared to be made of pure gold. As I watched, I could see each group come forward and fall down in worship before it. Viewing this idolatry on such a massive scale, I asked Elatia, “What is the meaning of this?”



“Satan is getting them prepared for when he will erect a similar image of the Beast in the temple on Earth, capable of speech, and with the power to require everyone to worship before it or be killed.⁷² This army is preparing to help make it happen.”

We seemed so very weak and vulnerable and helpless sitting there viewing this pending colossal event that was soon to befall all in the land of the living. What great power, faith, and patience the Lord must

have to allow such a plan to foment here without interference.

Circling high above us in the sky was a buzzard-like creature. So I asked what it was.

"Probably he is a favored one."

"Why is it 'favored'?"

"The favored are privileged souls that swear allegiance to the Devil and seal their fate with him. They were so rotten in life, that now in death the rulers of darkness reward them with certain positions of service. Sometimes transforming them into the animal form that most closely resembles the kind of person they were in life."

⁷² **Revelation 13:15** And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

“You mean that these stories of humans turning into werewolves and vampires and birds of prey have some basis in fact? Lycanthropy is a real thing?”

“Yes, at this level it is very common for souls to be transformed into animals.”

Elatia's revelation to me was not the most settling news. After being in Paradise I had somewhat slipped into an “I’m just a tourist here!” attitude. Yet this encounter in the desert was like a cold splash of water in my face. I now snapped back to the real dangers we faced here at the center of enemy territory. The thought of meeting and making some soul angry and having him suddenly transform into a raging beast did not appeal to me.

I understood that many situations on Earth have been turned inside out or reversed somehow because of strong negative spiritual influences. Like Satan himself had become an angel in reverse. Where he once may have been a star, he was now like a great black hole sucking everything into darkness.

We scrambled down to our horses, mounted and quickly rode off. I could at last see the city of Gragau. I could make out what appeared to be a great number of people on the roads, trudging along, being herded rather unwillingly by angel-like beings assigned to the task of getting them to their destination. I was not able to tell if these were good angels or conscripts assigned to this task. So I asked.

“Can fallen angels be given jobs and tasks to perform for the Lord?”

“Yes, of course. Some of them come in quite handy to perform tasks that the good angels would find unpleasant.”⁷³

⁷³ **Psalm 78:49** He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them. **Revelation 9:14** Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. **Revelation 9:15** And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an

As our horses came over a hill overlooking Gragau, we stopped for a moment and could see a very large road running off into the distance. I could not see the other end of the road, for it seemed to disappear into distant mist and spiritual fog.

Upon this road were a large number of people, many weeping as they walked, some in chains. There were tormenters prodding them along the road with spears, driving them on as though the people were prisoners taken by a conquering empire. Men and women all seemed to trudge along this broad road. Many of them were in sorrow and sadness. Some of them were angry and defiant. Some of them were confused and lost, the prized captives of a great spiritual war with the Earth—prisoners of a battle they did not truly understand.

"These are the souls of those who loved darkness and would not receive the light while they lived, and are not written in the book of life, and now they are to be held prisoners here and must walk through the dark valley of sorrows, on this great highway of despair.

"But where does this road begin?"

"This is death road and begins in the hearts of all who love darkness. All these are the souls of the dead arriving in Hell."

As I looked across the vast stream of people of every race and nationality arriving, a great sense of sorrow passed through me. "Is there any hope for these?"

"Where there is life there is hope. But these have passed beyond life, and now feel they have no hope. But I say, in God's mercy there is always hope. There is the power in the prayers of His saints, the holy ones who

hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. **1 Kings 22:22**
And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do

intercede before the throne of God for these. Some of these, after they have been tested here for a time, may find mercy and be transformed by prayer and the Holy Ghost. Some of them certainly can be delivered, and it is for those we battle with the dark forces of the Dark Prince.

“But most of these new arrivals will go through a preliminary judgment. Some will go directly into Satan’s army, others will be put in detention cells and prisons to meditate on their life, and others will receive correction, or preview the punishment they could receive at the final judgment in the hope that they will repent.”⁷⁴

We rode on down to the road, but the crowd became so thick it was nearly impossible to move. Yet the very stern looking “angels” kept prodding the crowd forward.

Elatia offered a comment, “As people push or crowd God out of their lives, their spiritual foundation crumbles and their lives, their communities, and nations begin to descend into the darkness of this world. It all hinges on the choices people make. Our journey will take us down into the darkest regions of this place. For the moment, let's enjoy being up here on the high ground while it still remains. Here there is still some light and life and brightness.”

Elatia continued, “It’s hard to think that all this was once a virtual paradise, a virtual heaven on earth, until that terrible day when our ancestors were seduced by Satan’s lies and condemned to die. And this place turned from being a beautiful garden to become a foul and fiendish prison camp.”

⁷⁴ **Jude 1:23** And some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. (ASV)

“Seeing so many souls arriving really brings to mind that verse about the road to destruction being wide and filled with people.⁷⁵ I just never imagined it to be so literal,” I commented in amazement.

“Death separates the physical from the spiritual, the body from the spirit. The human body returns to the physical Earth, but the spirit has no place to go but into its corresponding spiritual dimension. Just as the physical Earth is compatible to physical man, the spiritual dimension of Earth is compatible with the human spirit. It's a mystery to be sure.

“When a person dies, they go to the level of light they believed and received. A lot of undecideds come here, because their path to spiritual redemption through faith in Jesus has not been fully realized yet. It remains an act of faith, something to look for and hope for in the spirit. So when Jesus came here after His death on the cross, preaching salvation from death through faith in Him, it created quite a sensation. Jesus was the first one to come back to life after dying—and He really was dead, not like those who are revived from death in a near death experience.”

“Are death and Hell spirits, or just conditions?⁷⁶ I know the Bible says that in the end when the world is judged death and Hell (Hades) are cast into the Lake of Fire.”⁷⁷

“Well, death certainly is a condition, as to whether it is a spirit, I am not certain, but it appears that it is.⁷⁸ Death came into being as the result

⁷⁵ **Matthew 7:13** Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

⁷⁶ **Revelation 20:13** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

⁷⁷ **Revelation 20:14** And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

⁷⁸ **Revelation 6:8** And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the

of sin, so it's an unnatural event that came about as part of the curse. Death is the result of sin. The Bible depicts it as an identifiable being in a few places. Death and Hell appear as two of the horsemen of the Apocalypse. They both came into being as a result of God's curse on man, so really they are just temporary conditions that will come to their end in the lake of fire, but they are commanded to release their dead before that time."⁷⁹

"Didn't anyone get to go to Heaven before Jesus came to Earth?" I asked in concern. "It seems to me that Adam and Eve, and Abel, and Enoch, and Abraham, and Elijah, and Elisha, and Moses, and lots and lots of other spirits of good people went up in to Heaven when they died. They were not down in the Earth waiting for Jesus to come and rescue them."

"Of course, many good spirits before Jesus came were carried up by the angels to be with the Lord in Heaven. As Jesus told us, there are many mansions in His Father's house. There is obviously a Heaven that existed from the beginning of time wherein God and His angels reside. New Jerusalem, however, refers to the special city built by the Son, a place prepared for us who believe in Jesus. New Jerusalem is a portable part of Heaven that will someday be brought down to earth.

"But the earth back then was still very much Satan's stronghold, and there was lots of battling going on between angels. You see, Satan would come right up before the Lord and point people out and bring up all sorts of terrible things they had done wrong in life. So even though they were

fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

⁷⁹ **Revelation 20: 12,13** And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

happy to be with the Lord, they still often had to overcome terrible accusations and great condemnation at the hands of their Accuser,⁸⁰ Satan. He was like a prosecuting attorney.

“Still, there must have been a big difference in being up there with the Lord and being confined in some place of punishment or limbo-like state way down in the spirit world. The world of the spirit above and the world of the spirit below were different, I am sure. Back then only the mightiest of God’s angels ventured into these lower realms, and when they did, there was usually a big fight to keep them out.

“But after Jesus visited, these dark prisons changed radically. As Jesus Himself explained, ‘I am able to come into the house of Satan and work the works of God openly because I have overpowered and bound him.’”⁸¹

“When He died it created quite a sensation on Earth too!” I added. “I believe there was a terrible earthquake at the time, and the powers of Hell were shaken. It would be nice to know more about Satan, seeing as we are on his territory. I know that he has been around a long time, and through deceptive means has gained some control of the Earth and the people on it. Can you tell me more about him?”

“All I know about him is recorded in the Bible. Jesus said he was a liar, a thief, and a murderer. Satan may have shown Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, but he should have shown him what they would be like after he finishes with them. Totally ruined. His attempts at creating a perfect empire has been a flat out failure.”

⁸⁰ **Revelation 12:10** And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our

God and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God and and night.

⁸¹ ^v **Matthew 12:29** Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

"So through Adam and Eve's sin, death and Satan sort of took over the world? He became the god of this world, especially the spiritual side of our world?"

"Satan is a spirit, and although he wants to stay way up there in heavenly regions, more and more he is being driven down and confined to the dark realms of the physical. Places farther down, deep within the Earth. Few children of light go there, for it is a place of great despair and fearful waiting for judgment. Ultimately he and all his followers will be destroyed in the second death. Right now, God has a terrible beast locked up down there in a great bottomless pit. Satan is soon to take his place. From within the pit one can see the great Lake of Fire which is called the Second Death!"

12. Divine Intervention

"Explain what the Second Death is," I asked Elatia, curious to learn how the souls of the dead were able to die again.

"It is both a place and an appointed time where God destroys the wicked spirits. Until now only the body dies, whereas the spirit lives on. When children of God leave their bodies, their spirits are translated and changed. Jesus compared it to being born again so that they may see and enter the Kingdom of God with a new spirit, truly free from their former selves and sins, so they can go up and be with the Lord. Unregenerate spirits come here to Hell and are given a little time to consider their lives while they wait for the final judgment. In the end when all the great record books are opened, and the earth and the sea have to give up their dead, all the spirits that ever existed will stand before the Judgment Seat of God's Great White Throne. Those found written in the great Book of Life will live, but those not found written there, who have remained rebellious and recalcitrant, who choose death rather than life, shall be put to death by being cast into a great lake of spiritual fire. That is the Second Death.

"However, the spirits that have been renewed by God because of their faith in Jesus, are no longer subject to the law of sin and death. God takes them to Heaven with Him. Jesus frees them. The god of this world is usually allowed to destroy their body, but that is all he can do.⁸² He has no power over their recreated spirits, and also we have a regenerated body to look forward to. Similar to the one you now enjoy. At the second resurrection we will be reunited with an improved version of our physical body.

⁸² **Matthew 10:28** And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him [Jesus] which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

"God rescues people all over the world from destruction every day. Miracles do happen, more often than you realize. God has even taken some people's bodies out of this world, Enoch and Elijah for example, and possibly Moses. Of course, there is often a battle with Satan when He does."⁸³

"But I thought that there was some hope for every spirit, even the Devil?"

"There is, while there is life, for where there is life there is hope. As long as a spirit exists, it is alive and there is some hope for change. But the Spirit of God will not always strive to bring one to repentance. And ultimately whether a spirit accepts God's deliverance from death is up to it. Some spirits never will repent. They choose to be brute beasts that have to be destroyed."

"But if Satan is the king of this world, then why do so many things not seem to be in his control?"

"The Earth belongs to the Lord. The Lord is the God of Heaven and of Earth. Satan is only a thief, a pretender, and a usurper. He does not have full control here because the Earth is a creation of God, and is subject to God and His laws of creation. Satan is a destroyer, and would rather see the world destroyed than have to live with the reminder that God created the Earth to someday be His home. God's laws of creation govern all His creation and limit what Satan can do. When he wants to cause destruction he has to get permission to do so."

⁸³ **Jude 1:9** Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

Elatia continued, "Remember how terrified Cain became when he learned that the Earth had opened her mouth and received Abel's blood⁸⁴ and that now Cain would not be able to grow food anymore? And you must have read that the Earth will open her mouth in the Endtime to protect God's children from a great flood sent from the mouth of the Dragon to destroy them."

"But surely Satan exerts a lot of control over the physical world still," I said. "Even Satan's great prophet will be able to perform wonders on Earth, and many weather conditions and cataclysmic events seem spiritually linked to him, like that hurricane he used to kill Job's children, or the great storm he created to try to drown Jesus and His disciples when they were crossing the sea of Galilee. Surely that was the work of the Prince of the Power of the Air who walks up and down in the Earth?"

"Yes, the physical world does reflect the battles that go on in the spirit. It is true that Satan and his forces do bring destruction to people on Earth but not without God's permission. And remember that God's good angels with His permission also pour out terrible judgments upon the Earth. It was good angels that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, and slew the Syrian army, and many other such things."

"No wonder the world is in such a mess. People are not only destroying the planet, but angels from both sides do damage as well."

"That's what happens in a war. And speaking of a war, we now are at the front lines of our battlefield, the city of Gragau. What you see is what has become of that spiritual dimension that once enveloped and occupied the physical Earth, from the upper atmosphere and the highest mountain

⁸⁴ **Genesis 4:11** And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

top down to the very foundations of the Earth. This is what has become of that world. It is now a place where the kings of the Earth go to live on long after their earthly empires have fallen and crumbled into dust. This is that place where death and the Oppressor rule over man. Here Satan has his seat and government.

"Hell, this spiritual netherworld, like the Earth itself, was created very beautiful. It was a garden of peace and a place of wonder and goodness given to inspire the spirit of man. In those beginning days man could behold this world of the spirit as easily as his own, but he lost his ability the day he chose to disobey God and let evil corrupt his spirit. His eyes that had seen so much good now beheld evil. Like God and Satan, he now knew the difference between good and evil. When the spirit in man fell, this place fell with him for it had been given to him. This place now called Hell, has in it much that is evil, but like the promises of God there still are places kept by God where evil has not been able to pollute and destroy.

"Someday God will destroy them that have destroyed the earth.⁸⁵ He will burn up the surface of the old Earth and create a new heaven and a new Earth where the righteous shall dwell with Him forever.⁸⁶ You will see many things here, some wonderful, some shocking, triumphant and troubling. There are many dark mysteries here, for this is where the seat of the power of evil is, the seat of Satan himself."

The words this strange, mysterious, and beautiful young woman spoke to me, burned into my heart. I felt a surge of excitement and a thrill fill me at the thought of being in great danger, at the thought of doing battle with

⁸⁵ **Revelation 11:18** ...and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

⁸⁶ **Isaiah 65:17** For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. **Revelation 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.

evil forces, at the thought of just being here, a spy from another world, able to see the inner workings of the Dark Kingdom that controls much of my world and its governments, the powers and the principalities that are the source of oppressions and the evil that rules in my world.⁸⁷ I was entering a whole new level of Hell. I could see none of the former beauty that Elatia spoke of, only a city in a wasteland. It might have once been glorious, but the long drought of sin and human misery had parched and scorched anything that was green and alive.

We had just gotten off our horses when we heard someone cry, “There they are! Stop them!”

Elatia said, “Uh-oh! We’ve been spotted.” She mounted quickly and dug her heels in the side of her horse that responded with giant strides forward, plowing through the crowded street like a hot knife through butter, and I followed right behind. “We will have to get rid of these horses and change our appearance,” she yelled back. We dodged behind some dilapidated shacks “There is a hidden portal just up ahead somewhere,” and Elatia dismounted.

This was the only time I had seen Elatia looking perplexed. She drew her sword and began probing the air. She was obviously trying to find the hidden entrance to the world above which stood hidden somewhere around here. The question was, could she find it before our attacker found us?

“There are a number of portals leading up to the heavenlies,” she said. “They are mainly used by angels doing regular patrol duties, but on occasion they can be used for other purposes, such as transporting souls quickly away from these zones controlled by the Devil. They are like

⁸⁷ **Ephesians 6:12** For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

tunnels in the spirit that sometimes appear as having stairs or a ladder in them or simply a chute that leads upwards. They are not unlike the access tube I brought you through to this world. Only these are accessible from any dimension of the spirit and take you straight up if you can find them.”⁸⁸

I claimed the verse, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”⁸⁹ And also the verse, “Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.”⁹⁰ And as I was meditating on the verses I began to see as though in a dream, a portal not far from where we stood. It was not clear at all, but sort of wavy and out of focus. I dismounted quickly and ran to it and knocked where it appeared to be. A huge door made of some unknown substance slid open.

Elatia was delighted and looked very relieved. But she told me not to enter the portal myself. “Stop!” Elatia warned me. “Do not enter that portal or you will be dead for sure.” I could feel a force at work drawing me into it. It was a very pleasant sort of a body magnetism that felt wonderfully liberating. As though all the cares and concerns of my life were going to be lifted off of me, no more climbing the stairs to my dingy apartment, no more feeling hungry, no more street gangs hassling me. No more riding through Hell and the desert Suddenly I felt a firm hand take hold of my shoulder and pull me back from this liberating and inebriating

⁸⁸ **Genesis 28:12** And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

⁸⁹ **Matthew 7:7,8**

⁹⁰ **Revelation 3:8**

feeling of bliss. It was Elatia reminding me to stop, as my time had not come yet.

“It isn’t your time to go yet, we still have things to do down here.” Her words came to me as echoes in a thick fog, and it took me several moments to return to my senses.

Elatia was obviously in communication with someone, because there suddenly appeared two men dressed in white. The portal was a little off to the right of the roadway. We dismounted quickly and one man emerged and took my horse from me and sent it running off into the crowd. I felt rather badly that my horse was not considered worthy of entering the portal and leaving this rough existence behind. But Elatia assured me that in the end he would be taken up to heavenly pastures, and run free with other horses who have gone on. Maybe I would get to ride him again at the Battle of Armageddon. Buccopherous bolted through the open portal and vanished. While the other man who must have been a master at disguises, dressed us in robes similar to what the people in the crowds were wearing, complete with walking sticks and beads with skull motifs. At the moment we stood in the entrance to the portal, apparently invisible to all. We emerged, quickly walked around to the front of the buildings and casually joined the crowd on the highway of doom, looking every bit the part of a couple of devotees of death.

Our would-be assailants saw my horse running off and were now busy pursuing it through the crowd. They seemed puzzled and confused by our sudden disappearance and the disappearance of the big black horse. Standing there in my newly acquired persona, I got a first-hand experience of what it was like being an angel unawares,⁹¹ however inappropriately I

⁹¹ **Hebrews 13:2** Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

felt we were dressed. Elatia explained that this deception was necessary in order to complete our mission, but her explanation didn't make me feel any better about walking around as a devotee of the Temple of Death.

13. The Mission

”So what exactly is our mission here?”

”Souls,” was her simple reply. ”We are sent to free a large number of souls who are being held prisoners in the Temple of Death.”

”How are we to do that?” was my shocked response.

”Very simple,” Elatia continued. ”I have a pardon sealed with the King’s own seal for the prisoners, but it needs to be delivered in person by a person of faith, or the keepers will not recognize it and those prisoners here will not believe sufficiently to set them free.”

”Where exactly are these prisoners?” I asked.

”They were kept in a neutral zone until recently, when the Dark Lord had them removed and taken to a lower dungeon, partly to reduce any hope they had of ever escaping this world, and to make any rescue of them more difficult for us.

”There are still regions where there is hope for those dwelling in this darkness. They’re in what we call neutralized zones, ruled by spirits who in life tried to do the right things for their people but were hampered by evil forces. They continue to rule down here much as they did on Earth.”

”But when Jesus came He must have freed many from such places.”

”He did, but many chose to stay here where they could continue to be rulers of people.⁹² They didn’t want to give up what they could see and feel and the power they had, for something they had to believe and receive by faith. So they remained. Some sank into greater darkness and evil, others in time saw that their evil ways and false religious beliefs had an adverse effect on the people they ruled, and sought in their own way to repent. Some of these spirits became kings and queens in the earth. Some

⁹² **Job 3:14** with kings and counselors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves;

became as goddesses who try to help their people, the living and non-living.

“You must have read how the prince of Persia resisted the angel Gabriel for fifteen days when he was trying to deliver a message to Daniel. Well, that demon was once a ruler over Persia and controlled the king who ruled on Earth, and together they became worse here.”⁹³

I had never realized how the governing of this realm called Hell was set up. We are never given a clear and accurate picture while on Earth: we just have images of devils with pitchforks tormenting people, or a lake of fire where lost souls are sent to be barbecued until they burn away the evil they have done. I had never realized that Hell was an extension of the wickedness on earth. I had always just accepted it as fact that it was a place overrun by fire and brimstone and souls in torment, various religions portraying it in different ways, but not as a real extension of life, with the same evil men ruling and the same injustices being committed over and over again. Generals going on in their endless wars repeating mistakes of their life over and over again. I remembered a passage from the Old Testament, in Isaiah, that described how the kings in Hell retain their thrones in much the same way they did on earth.⁹⁴

⁹³ **Daniel 10:13, 20** But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me [Gabriel] one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Then said he [to Daniel the prophet], Knowest thou wherefore I [Gabriel] come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.

⁹⁴ **Isaiah 14: 18,20** Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy (Lucifer's) coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.... All the kings of the nations even all of them, lie in glory , everyone in his own house...(but speaking of Lucifer) thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.

“The quickest access to the netherworld,” Elatia informed me, “is through an entrance in the center of the Temple of Death which is in the old quarters of Gragau, one of Satan’s principle cities.”

We were about enter into an ancient city of sin. I did not know what to expect to find here, but I prayed that the Lord would keep us. I must say I never expected to find cities in Hell with people moving about freely. There is all kinds of commerce going on, with souls going about their business much the way we do on Earth. But everywhere you sense that something is wrong. Perhaps it is the hollow look you get when passing someone on the street: never a real smile or warm welcoming greeting, rather like the pseudo-sincere sycophantic alluring smile you get on Earth from those who are trained in snaring souls. If I thought that people in my world were cold and distant, I couldn’t begin to compare with the feeling I had here. Such loss and loneliness I felt as never before in a world full of people. A world where all love had been erased from existence.

Elatia had warned me to control my expressions to not show too much emotion or light within. She had told me, “Stay as somber as a judge no matter what you are feeling about a situation. This is one city where no one reveals the truth about their inner feelings, especially if they are good.”

14. Becoming One In Gragau

The City of Gragau, also known locally as New Babylon, like so many of its earthly look-a-likes was a crowded, filthy, cesspool of iniquity, full of dark deeds and trafficking of every foul sort of merchandise imaginable. Elatia told me to stick close to her and to follow her lead should we be confronted.

I learned from Elatia that unlike most spirit cities, Gragau had been built upon an existing physical city. In ancient times there was a city here, but desert sands, wind, and erosion hid its earthly foundations from view. On Earth it was long gone and forgotten, but here it was on a central trading route, and served not just the demons wandering these wastelands, but had become a favorite place of trading in the netherworld.

It was strange that in their business dealings they pretended to be trustworthy. I guess even thieves and liars have to follow a code of conduct of fairness between themselves. I knew they weren't trustworthy as their shifty eyes and manners betrayed their intentions.

Before entering the city, Elatia stopped at a peculiar shop. It was a dark and dingy shrine-like shop with all sorts of dark robes and ghastly ornaments in it. It looked like it had been decorated by Death himself, and it had the unmistakable odor of rotting flesh to match. After rummaging through what I thought was a pile of rags, she produced two vile-looking cowls.

"Here, pull this over you," she said, handing me one of the grim looking gowns.

"What's wrong with what we have on?" I asked. "These make us look like a couple of draconian monks."

"It's required when visiting the Temple of Death that one be wearing a death cowl. They will help to further hide our identities in this place. They

are worn by devotees of the dark prince on a pilgrimage to the Temple of Death."

"Aaagh!" I blurted out in revulsion, pulling the evil thing away from myself.

"Just pray over it and put it on," she commanded.

She selected a couple of rosary-like bead works with skulls strung together and ending in a pentagon-like star rather than a cross. "Here, take this too! It will make you look the part, and we need to look the part we are playing as two unholy pilgrims!" Then seeing the look of obvious concern and uncertainty on my face as to whether it was all right for a child of God to be parading around the Kingdom of Darkness in death clothes, she raised her eyebrow and added with a little twinkle in her eyes, "When in Gragau, be a Gragauian!"

I put the dreaded robe on, and the dark dank hood covered my face. I really looked like a disciple of death. The cloth was of some coarse material and had a very unpleasant smell that reminded me of something dead, so I asked Elatia. "What is this cowl made from?"

She answered, "You really do not want to know."

Elatia paid the merchant with what appeared to be gold.

"Gold! Is that the currency here?" I asked.

"No! It's one of the least valued items of exchange to be sure, but they like it because it is a valuable item here based on the value of the item in your world. The demon value of gold is determined by the amount of lust and worship the spirit owner of the gold receives through the people on Earth who desire gold."

"What are the other forms of currency here?"

"Demons crave worship and desire to control people. So anything that people on Earth greatly desire, especially for motives of self-importance,

pride, greed, showy appearances, and power, those sorts of things become hot trade items down here."

"Antiques and art?"

"There is a very big business. There are whole agencies here that specialize in pushing the intrinsic values of things up so that more and more people will desire to have the thing."

"What about popular film, music, and sports idols? Do they count?"

"They count—very much if there is an object that can be exchanged that represents that person. You're starting to get the idea! And beginning to understand a bit better what the Bible means when it says that 'the love of money is the root of all evil.' A plant depends on its roots for nourishment, people of the world value money to keep the fruit on their trees of evil and greed attractive. Money was first introduced in the world by Cain, and it caught on instantly. The value that people assign to things in their hearts can cause them to desire something so bad that it is the same as worshipping it.

"Money worship is big on Earth, and here you will find that a demon prince, Mammon, handles all the lust and evil it generates. But we need to keep moving!"

Passing by what appeared to be a restaurant, Elatia said, "We do not eat here, as it would rob us of our strength, and the food is unholy for it comes from the Temple of Death. The wine they serve is made from the blood of zealots and other people they have slain because they were not of their faith."

"What do these priests do at the temple?"

"They go to pray for the living that they may be ensnared by sin and brought down to Hell. Spirits ask them to seek Satan's help in causing them to fall through sin and disease. Some may approach you, offering you something of value if you will do this for them, but you do not have to

Speak to them or accept their offering. If you must speak, just say 'I am already bound.' Look straight ahead and keep walking. They will understand by this that you have been commissioned already to seek help against some person or persons among the living."

As we walked on we passed by many strange shops with various items for sale on display. In one shop were little mannequins with different parts of their body missing or mutilated or afflicted in some obvious way. It reminded me of voodoo dolls that some who practice witchcraft use to afflict their victims.

After winding through these narrow streets lined with small stalls, we at last came to a large open square with a huge statue of Satan ruling triumphant over the Earth. A plaque on the statue read, "We dedicate this temple to him who conquered the world through lust for power, and now rules it through fear and death."

"Isn't there a verse in the Bible that says something about that?"

"Yes, I think it goes, 'As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, Jesus himself took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.'"⁹⁵

"Wow! They should put that on that plaque instead. It would shut down this whole Temple of Death and all its devilish disciples. What I don't get is that if Jesus took the keys of death and Hell back to Heaven with Him, why is there still death and Hell?"

"It's complicated. Death and Hell came upon us for a reason. Man sinned and failed God and the glory He had planned for us. So even though Jesus has the keys, man still has to go through death to enter the

⁹⁵ **Hebrews 2:14** Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

spirit world. But that transition is a lot better now that Jesus has promised to do away with death and Hell in the lake of fire.”⁹⁶

⁹⁶ **Rev 20:14-15 (NAS)** And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

15. The Marketplace

I saw life-size posters of men, women, and children of all races and religions depicted as being dragged through the streets of Gragau in chains. I learned that these were the souls of people who were still alive, but who were struggling with some terminal disease. They were posted so that the demons passing would remember to pray for Satan to make them sicker and bring them to Hell quickly. I asked Elatia if they had other reports on the number expected from famines, floods, plagues, hurricanes, wars, car crashes and other accidents, etcetera.

She said that was the job of the disciples of death to coordinate and assist in assigning the forces of Hell to exploit and expedite all such projects. She said they seem to be quite excited about their latest project which involves a nuclear power plant incident and a large city.

We walked by shop after shop and open market stalls stuffed with all kinds of strange things. From time to time, I would ask Elatia to explain something.

"That creature seems to be selling things that I have seen in prominent places on Earth. Are the things in this stall just imitations of things on Earth?"

"Yes, and vice versa, the things in your world are just imitations of things fashioned here in Hell. Some might be imitations. Expensive things on earth might actually have a spirit object behind the object itself. I wish I could take more time to help you understand the direct connection between the things in the market places of this world and those things in your world. For example, look at that large stone carving of that beast with horrible eyes and gaping mouth. The demon that runs this shop probably possesses an image like it in the physical world. That particular one stands

outside a famous temple on Earth, it is visited by thousands of tourists and devotees each year."

"So why is the object kept here if it operates on the Earth?"

"Well, each item found here is directly connected to someone or something in your world. These things are like keys that control them. Each object or addiction that a person has, has a matching representation of it in the spirit. The demon trader who owns the object in the spirit wants to trade control of it for something better to possess.

They want some place or person or thing that will garner them even more power, attention, and worship, or give them even more control or influence over more people because of their idolatry. Don't you get it? The hearts and minds and souls of people are the currency of this place.

Demons measure their wealth by the number of people they own or control or influence,

and when those people die, the demon gets credits in the Death Bank. If a demon can get people killed as an offering to himself or herself, that gives them more power and prestige here."

"But how does it work? Does this guy sell his rights to an idol, or share his possession with someone or something, or does he rent them, or give out a franchise to work his idol, or what?"



"Any and all of the above," she replied. "You have stock markets on Earth, and here they are more like soul exchanges. Some of the most valued stocks down here are things like the Beelzebub holdings which is rated at over a billion souls."

"So if I am understanding correctly, you are saying that all the things we consider valuable and great and wonderful in my dimension are hot items that these spirits and demons like to buy and sell and trade with each other? That's why the Word warns us to 'love not the world, neither the things in the world'."

"That's pretty much it. Idolatry, dear boy, plain and simple! There is nothing dearer to the heart of some demon, if he had a heart, than to control people through the things they possess."

We went a little further, and there in a shop window was a model of a very expensive car on display. It looked absolutely magnificent, and posted above it was an electronic tally board with two sets of numbers showing. "The first set of numbers," Elatia explained, "is the number of living souls currently owning this car, and the next is the total number of adherents or followers it commands."

I know a great desire to own it gripped me when I came near the car. While looking at the thing, I started wanting it and wondering what I would have to do to own one. What sacrifices I would have to make to become one of the chosen few to get to drive around in it and become the envy of everyone? It's scary!

"And those are just symptoms of a materialistic malady," Elatia explained. "Imagine the rush a demon gets who receives all the worship people give to their possessions in your world. And that is nothing. It gets much worse."

We had not walked long before we came to a central large square that seemed to be in the heart of the city, the focal point or center around

which the city is built. As in some megalopolis cities on Earth, high up on the side of one huge structure was a massive video-like display, only it was much more realistic than our viewing devices. So real, in fact, that it took my breath away, not just because of its construction but because of what, or should I say who it was displaying. Before my eyes in this city of terrors was one of the most popular young actors there was back on Earth, and below this image of him were numbers reeling off across the bottom of the screen like those of the stock market.

"What is this all about?" I questioned.

"Oh, that's the New Babylonian Exchange. Those numbers scrolling across the bottom are his worship ratings. He is being put on the open market by a collector. Perhaps the spirit or demon that helped him get to his place of world fame is now ready to dump him and he wants to get something for him while he is still popular."

"What, they buy and sell popular people like merchandise?" It was a disturbing revelation. Like suddenly walking into a secret slave market and watching people you know being sold like pieces of meat over a counter.

"Oh yes. Movie stars and sports heroes are very hot items. They generate a lot of man worship, praise and attention, which if they do not defer to the Lord, makes them a commodity in the control of a demon operator. Living people are the main source of revenue on the Exchange, and can give their owners substantial importance and influence. Hell has its social clubs and politics, too, you know."

A large crowd quickly formed beneath the giant screen which seemed more like an actual window looking into our world. In this instance, we were seeing the Academy Awards through the eyes of the actor being sold. Everyone watching got to feel the waves of pride and self-importance rushing through the man, then the scene cut to a very private moment in the person's life where we saw him standing in his apartment naked and

doing cocaine. "They always like to kick the bidding up with these kinds of personal details," Elatia commented. "It shows he has some weakness that will help maintain control of the person. You can own shares in anyone from a president to a pedophile. It's quite a business."

"But the overall currency, you say, is somehow related to souls?" I asked.

"Souls. Wealth among the damned or demons is measured in terms of the souls they control or how much influence they have over various humans."

"Soul control!"

"Yes, souls! Power over people is the currency of choice here, just as it is in your dimension. Human souls are the principle commodities traded on the market. If you are shocked at seeing spirits here bidding for shares in worldly leaders, actors, and actresses, then you would be horrified at what happens in places like that exclusive gambling casino over there!"

"So tell me!"

"In there, the lords of darkness, the demon kings of the Earth, win or lose fortunes at the toss of dice. Millions of shares in human souls and suffering can pass hands in a single evening of gambling. Whole nations, peoples, and places are played like poker chips by the high rollers in that place.

"The Lord does have to approve all major power shifts here, on Earth and up higher, but they kind of work on the 'if He doesn't stop us then it's okay' approach to things. What most demons don't realize is that God is just letting them fill their cup of iniquity so He can punish them without hesitation when the time comes, having given them every chance to repent. It's kind of like a dare game or playing chicken with God to see how far they can go before He will act to stop them. But their seeming courage is a false front. They are actually very afraid of God and what He will do.

He's made it very clear to them for many thousands of years. The fiery lake is, for example, a constant reminder to them of the consequence of giving themselves over to evil. But because God has not stopped them totally, they do not repent but become more evil and like brutish beasts created to be destroyed!"

"But can the Devil really own anyone's soul?"

"No, not really. A soul is like money you put in a bank. It's your money but you let someone else use it.

"The rules of the spirit are complicated as to who can win and how they win and what they win by a transaction in the spirit. Surprisingly, the Lord leaves a great deal up to the choices the souls themselves make. How they choose often determines what the Lord will then permit a demon to do. The strategies and rules of the game get pretty involved."

"So can people really win their souls back from the Devil like you see in some movies?"

"No. That is another big lie. Human souls never have and never will belong to Satan, they belong to God. Only by choosing to believe God above the Devil can a soul break the power Satan has over it. That choice is easier to make in your world than after death. Those that have decided against the Lord and done great evil on Earth might be put into prison or punished immediately as a warning to others.

"As long as a person's spirit is still in their body there is always hope for his soul. So if some lesser demon wins big time, they will say he got 'lucky', which means he was blessed by Lucifer, not the Lord! But when a powerful demon has a bad night at the tables or on the Exchange, he might say he was cursed by Heaven, or that too many prayers were against him."

One shop looked bright and inviting, and was offering good things to customers and I wanted to go in. But Elatia said, "Stop! Don't go near that place! That viper's pit is the most evil of all. In there are the merchants of

hypocrisy, the makers of schemes and scams, the plotters of murder, the appearance of good that is evil. Those evils spirits deal in deceit of the most wicked kind. They sell appearances of good for the purpose of evil."

"Can the wicked do good?"

"Of course! They not only can do good, they are supposed to do good! But the good deeds and appearances that these connivers manufacture and sell to the hearts and minds of evil men are wicked schemes, seductions, lies, and deceit that serve the oppressors. They first appear to be good and wonderful things. Perhaps a prize the victim supposedly has won, or some other good fortune come their way, maybe a surprising act of kindness, a helping hand, a deep concern, a false friendship. They make and sell the many masks of good appearances that evil intentions can put on to cover their mischief. All that is good and desirable, they employ for evil purposes. A good trap uses the best of baits."

"That is so evil! But those that use such devices must surely know that for whatever advantages they seem to gain in life, they lose in increased damnation to their own souls."

"That part of the deal is not shown or explained to a client. This is the oldest evil there is. Satan used it in the Garden of Eden to destroy the hope of humanity and bring them into bondage. It is the weapon of choice used by all who do not deal honestly with their fellow man. The perverse use of good for the purpose of evil is a great insult to God and an affront to the Holy Spirit. Satan himself is the father of all such merchandise.

"So Travis, do not be deceived by all the light and brightness there. Remember that Satan himself appears as an angel of light when it serves his purpose. The light you see there is actually one of the most revolting kinds of darkness there is. It is the warm smile that covers a plot to rob or kill someone. This is the House of Hypocrisy and lying lifestyles. Like weevils at work in a bag of grain or termites in wood, they eat away the

interior of a good work and leave only the outer shell of appearances. They have mastered the art of attacking anything that is good, and little by little replacing it with a mix of predigested pulp polluted by greed and the desire for gain. Religions and charitable causes are their preferred victims. The Bible speaks of them as being those who offer up showy prayers and weep at the funeral while they rob the widow of all that she has. The light that you see in this place is really darkness, because it destroys all the good that it touches except for the thin veneer of appearances of good it leaves on the surface.”⁹⁷

⁹⁷ **Mark 12:40** Which devour widows' houses, and for a presence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation. **Job 30:26** When I looked for good, then evil came unto me: and when I waited for light, there came darkness. **Psalms 38:20** They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is. **Psalms 52:3** Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. **Ecclesiastes 12:14** For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether it be evil. **Isaiah 5:20** Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

16. The Temple of Death

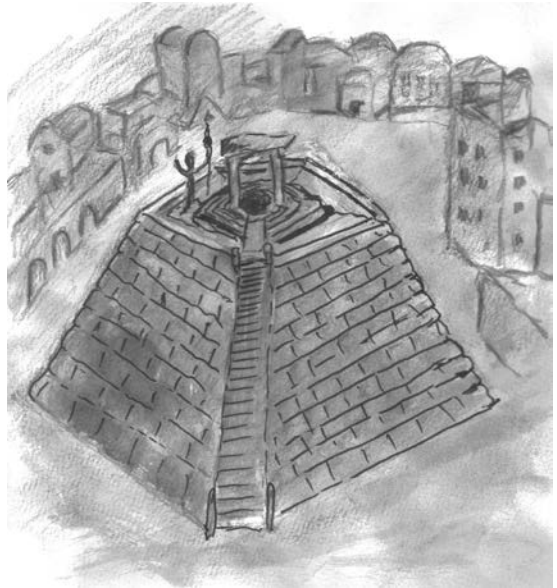
Like some ancient Aztec temple darkened with the blood of human sacrifice, the Temple of Death loomed before us. This loathsome five-sided pyramidal shaped building bore a mock resemblance to the great city of love and light prepared by the Son for all who love and believe in Him. I was encouraged to see that this morbid monument was not well kept, and the foundation seemed to be crumbling and rotting away. Still, a glance at the grounds and architecture told me that at one time it had been a great center of pagan worship.

"Who built this place, and why?" I asked.

"This place has been here nearly from the beginning. The Fallen Ones built it with slave labor as a great monument to death, to commemorate Satan's triumphant condemnation of all humanity to death. That represented to them a great defeat of God and His plans by seeming to prevent His promises and Word from ever being accomplished."

"It doesn't look like they took very good care of the place, does it?" I commented quietly to Elatia.

"They used to, but since Jesus came and undid their absolute control of death, they lost a lot of their zeal!"



I could not help but comment, "That's when this really became a dead religion!" We smiled at each other and laughed quietly. The place reminded me of so many churches back on Earth where only the dead shell of tradition and formality remained, and they use the Word of God like honey to attract parishioners.

The moment of dry humor seemed to ease some of the inner tension and apprehension I felt. I had no idea what dangers might be lurking at the top of the steep stone steps that led up the face of the building. However, at the top we found a great pentagon shaped edifice that reminded me of a similarly shaped building in my world where the high priests of death get together. The leering stone faces of gargoyle-like creatures lined the walls as another reminder of buildings on Earth. And high above, hanging from a set of converging arches were bells! "Hell's bells!" I reflected a moment on how loudly those cacophonous bells must have rung in alarm the day a small Child was born in Bethlehem and lay wrapped in swaddling clothes in a manger. While choirs of angels filled the night sky that wintery eve, the legions of Hell likely were being roused and rallied to try and destroy this infant before He could grow and speak. I could imagine the demon keeper of wicked King Herod being summoned to the death temple and ordered to inspire Herod to kill all newborn boys in the region.

As the years passed and the terrifying news spread throughout Satan's empire that "the holy one of God" had come and had not been stopped, Satan himself arose and attempted to tempt Him, then to terrify Him. All to no avail. The King of Life had come to destroy the Devil and death, and set humanity free, and no one could stop Him. This only begotten Son of God, instrument and author of life itself had the power to submit even to death and then to take His life up again. His human life was offered like a lamb to be slaughtered, but His spirit is the Lion of Judah, the Prince of life, hope and resurrection itself. He took on the death robes of mankind that

through His dying and resurrection He might destroy the mantle of death forever.

The Good Shepherd had come at last to retrieve His lost sheep stolen by the dark lords since the fall of mankind. Satan's fearful sting of death had held humanity hostage too long. By one man's disobedience Satan gained the advantage through death, but now by one Man's obedience to God, death was about to be destroyed. To his horror, Satan could not turn the Lamb from offering His life for the people. Then the slain Sun of Righteousness descended as a great light into these terrible regions of darkness and preached hope to all who were in prison here, and on the third day He arose victorious from the grave and taking with Him the very keys of death and Hell, along with a great multitude of spirits that believed in Him, and whose sins He forgave. This Man, Jesus, who was the firstborn of the living became the firstborn of the dead and granted that anyone who believed in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

My thoughts were such when another cowered creature came rapidly up the stairs behind us. He was adorned with strange chains and shackles that appeared to be made from human vertebrae. The stairs were narrow and I had to catch myself with my staff to keep from falling as the inconsiderate creature shoved his way past me. For a moment our faces met and I found myself staring straight into the tormented eyes of malevolence itself. As soon as the bone-clattering creature was well ahead of us, Elatia turned and looked at me with what seemed to be a look of concern.

"That was him!"

"Who?" I asked dreading to hear the answer.

"That spy in the sky belonged to him. His name is Doeg!"⁹⁸

"He looked like a dog's breakfast dragging all of those bones around!" I could only imagine whose bones they belonged to that kept him so bound.

"He looked right at me. Do you think he will do anything?"

"He very well might try."

A lump formed in my throat. We were about to go into the Temple of Death with a guy who became infamous in life for his temple executions.⁹⁹ I grasped my staff tighter and decided that the skull end would be the appropriate end to whack Doeg with if it came to a confrontation.

Elatia stopped climbing and spoke to me. "Let's pray and ask the Lord what to do. I know He wants us to go this way and deliver this message, but perhaps we need to wait."

We both desperately sought the Lord's help and guidance. We did not want to fail in our mission, but we did not want to walk into a trap either. After a moment Elatia lifted her head. "What did the Lord tell you?"

"I got the verse, 'this is the way walk you in it!'"¹⁰⁰ I replied.

Elatia said, "I got 'fear not, I will help you'¹⁰¹ and 'I will work all things together for good to them that love Me.'¹⁰² Go stand in the temple!"¹⁰³

⁹⁸ **1 Samuel 21:7** Now a certain man of the servants of Saul *was* there that day, detained before the LORD; and his name *was* Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the herdmen that *belonged* to Saul.

⁹⁹ **1 Samuel 22:18** And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod.

¹⁰⁰ **Isaiah 30:21** And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

¹⁰¹ **Isaiah 41:13** For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, "Fear not, I will help you."

¹⁰² **Romans 8:28**

¹⁰³ **Acts 5:20** Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

The Lord's encouragement helped me brave an entrance into the huge but dimly lit temple rotunda. Doeg was nowhere to be seen, but could easily have slipped into one of the anterooms off the surrounding inner wall, or he could be hiding behind any one of several massive statues that circled the chamber and also surrounded an enormous central altar where sat an abominable image of Satan. It was not hard to tell what aspect of death each idol in this macabre pantheon of ills represented: old age, famine, war, disease, infanticide, strangulation, suffocation, suicide, torture. On and on it went from the past to the present.

"What a gruesome gallery this is," I commented.

"There it is!" Elatia said excitedly, her mind elsewhere.

"There is what?" I asked, looking in the direction she was pointing, directly under the huge center altar.

"The door to the lower chambers!" Elatia had intentionally not explained too many of the exact details of our mission, preferring not to scare me to death but to reveal them to me as needed. We began walking toward a large brass door set in the side of the altar, covered with grotesque faces and ghastly green in color. We had not gone far when a shrill hysterical voice cut through the mortuary-like silence of the place, like a fire siren on a Sunday afternoon.

"There they are! Seize them! They have come to defile our sacred temple! They are the servants of the Lord Jesus and not of Satan! Don't let them get away!"

The clicking, rattling sound of bones was evidence enough for me that Doeg had sounded the alarm and had called the temple priests and whatever demons he could call up. His evil entourage was a revolting sight to behold: a wart-faced creature with the vilest bulldog-like creature

beside him on a chain, following closely behind Doeg, and an equally bad-looking crowd of demons behind them.

I glanced over at Elatia. She had thrown off the cowl and stood with sword drawn and ready to do battle. She looked magnificent and every inch a warrior of the faith. This small girl was full of surprises, and I for one was very glad for it. Her voice, powerful and confident, echoed in the dank sanctuary of death.

"We are here on the Lord's business. Stand down or taste His displeasure!"

The wart faced creature and his crew halted, but Doeg was in a rage and drew a sword from within his own gown.

"With this sword I slew the Lord's anointed and with it I will take you down into the bowels of Hell!" he bellowed.

Elatia raised her sword and a burst of light seared through the hellish hall and set upon the villain's sword. Doeg let out a shriek of pain as his sword glowed a fiery red in the darkened room. The molten metal ran down the blade like the blood of the innocents he had slain. The sword burned as though it had been dipped in the very Lake of Fire itself. Doeg tried to let go of the sword but it seemed to be fastened to his hand. One of the high priests fell back in horror and covered his face screaming, "It is a sign! The time of our torment is come! Hide yourselves from the face of the Lamb!" He led the charge out of the room. As quickly as they had appeared, they scurried away to hide themselves, leaving Doeg standing alone.

Then a most amazing thing happened! As the burning drops of molten metal sparked and splashed onto Doeg's garment, some of it touched the bones that formed his bizarre chains. Suddenly the bones began to take form and men appeared dressed in white robes. These were the priests of God slain by Doeg come to take him to his reward. Doeg stood in shocked

amazement as at least ten young men materialized around him. They laid hold on him and dragged the howling cur toward the great green door under the head altar that swung open of its own accord, as though hungry to receive him.

I stood, mouth agape, as this strange procession marched by me, escorting Doeg to the dungeons below. As one of the young men passed by, he smiled and said, "Follow! The Lord has sent us to deliver this one to his reward and to escort you to that place that He has bid you go."

I could not have been more relieved. I burst out in praise to God. I had not relished the thought of descending into that pit and prison house of perdition without some serious help from the Lord, and He had not failed.

17. Descent into Darkness

With my heart nearly pounding out of my chest with anticipation and dread, we began our descent into the dark pit. One of the young men reminded me to stay close to the path by the wall and not wander too far out to the inner edge, because, as he said, “This is the famous bottomless pit—if you fall in you could be falling forever.” The men produced torches that blazed with a peculiar bright white flame to light the way ahead. They seemed friendly, like a band of brothers that had taken us under their wing. I assumed that their native language was different than mine, but somehow I understood them perfectly. I wondered if somehow Elatia’s words to me were also passing through an unseen translator.

The sides of the pit contained what appeared to be prison cells with countless wretched creatures locked in them. We came to one that was empty and the men forced the rather reluctant Doeg into the depressing enclosure. Doeg began to rant and rave like a man who had just lost his mind, but the men were unmoved in their determination to see him confined. I actually pitied him. Suddenly a commanding voice that sounded like thunder came from farther down in the pit. It echoed off the somber walls most terribly. “Shut the fool up!” Doeg fell silent.

I was shaken by the huge voice and the force behind it. I asked a young man who or what kind of creature could have such a voice. He said, “That is the ultimate prisoner who has been chained in this bottomless pit since the days of Creation, because he is a pathological killer of men. Apparently he was placed in this dark prison by the archangel Michael with the help of a few other angels to keep the Earth safe from him until the time appointed. His name is Apollyon, or he is simply called ‘the Beast’.”

I had read about this prisoner in the Bible and the role he and other of his kind will play in the Endtime. I realized he had been a powerful angel

before his fall, and I was glad that he was constrained at least for the moment. He was once a leader in the Lord's army and now in his twisted condition commands an army of locust-like creatures.

Another of the young men explained to me, "There are several 'beasts' that are allowed to rise to power in the Endtime, but this one is particularly bad for he will get his power and authority from the dragon which is Satan. He has 10 heads, and one head will receive a deadly wound which will be healed. Another beast will come up out of the earth and has all of the first beast's power, plus he has the ability to bring fire down from Heaven. This second beast creates and give life to an image of the first beast that is capable of killing anyone who will not worship it. He will demand that everyone receive a mark in their hand or forehead."¹⁰⁴

We continued following the tiny path that led us around this massive gorge. Somewhere a great distance below in the darkness I could make out what appeared to be a terrifying river of fire that was bubbling and spurting out this white hot liquid. I asked the man closest to me what it was. And he said, "That is a tributary of the lake of fire."

"You mean there is more to it?" I gasped. For just seeing it from this distance filled me with an overwhelming revulsion and the desire to throw up. If seeing just a tributary filled me with such a feeling of dread and

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Revelations 13:12-16 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.¹³ And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,¹⁴ And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.¹⁵ And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.¹⁶ And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

hopelessness, what must seeing the actual lake be like? For the river burned with a spiritual fire that made me tremble and feel sick all over. I asked him what the purpose of such a place could be, although I already had a good idea of what its purpose was.

He replied, "That is God's great incinerator. It's called the Second Death where God will destroy both death and Hell forever. Fear the Lord who is able to destroy both soul and body there. God one day will have to say to evil doers, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

"Who are the cursed?" I asked.

"Whoever is not found written in the Book of Life,"¹⁰⁵ was his simple reply.

"Obviously the creature bound down here is not written in the Book of Life. Does he know what is going to happen to him?" My ability to comprehend such things had nearly reached its limits.

"He does, but like many who are told that such a thing will happen to them, he brushes it off and ignores it. This one is called the Beast for a reason. He shall torment many, for when he is freed he takes with him an army of locusts. He goes up in a great confusion of dark smoke. His army of locusts are in the smoke, and the locusts have the power to sting like

¹⁰⁵ **Revelation 13:8** And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. **Revelation 17:8** The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. **Revelation 3:5** He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

scorpions.¹⁰⁶ But the Lord will command them not to hurt the grass or any tree or anything that is green, but to sting only those men which do not have the seal of God in their foreheads. And their sting will not kill anyone, but torment them five months. But the men they sting will want to die, but death will flee from them. This Beast is a king over the locusts. He is referred to as the angel of the bottomless pit.”¹⁰⁷

Elatia gave me a small piece of bread to chew on which tasted a bit like honey and coriander. “We are almost there,” she said.

I was amazed to discover that many of the past Kings of the Earth were down here.¹⁰⁸ They still sat on thrones as though still ruling over their people. Some of them now realized that they could have helped their people more, but through the cruelty and the indifference of their policies and laws they had created much darkness and despair. Now that it was too

¹⁰⁶ **Revelation 9:11** And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

¹⁰⁷ **Revelation 9:11** And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. **Revelation 9:1** And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. **Revelation 13:11** And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. **Revelation 9:2** And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. **Revelation 9:3** And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. **Revelation 9:5** And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

¹⁰⁸ **Isaiah 14:9, 18** Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming. It stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it has raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All the kings of the nations, even all of them lie in glory, every on in his own house.

late to rule well and justly, they were doomed to repeat their mistakes over and over again with the same calamitous results.

We seemed to have descended as far as we could go around the sides of this massive pit. Far below I caught glimpses of molten white hot liquid and dark smoke, and the locust-like insects were there in great number, hatching, ready for the time of their release on the surface of the Earth, which was drawing near.

One of the nearest men commented, "Here is where we keep the Beast chained up. He is a thoroughly nasty fellow. It is best we leave him alone, but his time of imprisonment is nearly over here, and I hope not to be anywhere near here when he is released!"

I saw a prison door, like nothing I had ever seen before, that stood locked with an exceptionally huge and intricate looking lock. Through the bars I could see a huge black shape chained to the walls. I assumed it to be the Beast himself. Just passing that close I could feel his total malevolence and could understand how he was capable of causing so much turmoil on the earth.

The air was acrid and thick with smoke that made breathing difficult. At last we entered a level containing a large cell with a number of people in chains. All around them was an atmosphere of doom and gloom. They seemed to be the most hopeless and lost souls of all behind the grim prison doors that appeared securely locked. But to my surprise Elatia said happily, "Well, here they are." And she took her sword and struck the lock. Instantly the door opened to my surprise and to the amazement of the prisoners inside, who let out a cheer and began to praise the Lord for His great love and mercy.

Then in a clear, loud voice Elatia delivered her message to the prisoners.

“People of San Pedro, I come with a message of hope and promise from the Prince of Love who gave His life a ransom for your souls. I want you to know that He is able to deliver you even from this darkest corner of Hell. He said, ‘I’m the resurrection and the life and whosoever believeth in Me though he were dead, yet shall he live.’¹⁰⁹ He shall never ever die. He says, ‘Come unto Me ye who are weary and fainting; though ye sit in great darkness I will be a light for you.’”

Then an old man that appeared to be their leader, who I was told was called Wantu the Wild One, said, “Fair maiden sent by the Prince of Light and Love, what hope is there for us here? For we have all sinned and deserve this fate.”

Elatia replied, “Jesus said, ‘ If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth¹¹⁰ If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.’¹¹¹”

While Elatia delivered this moving message of hope and promise to the prisoners, many came forth declaring their need for Jesus.

Elatia quickly and quietly recounted to me the story behind Wantu and his band. He was once a chieftain of a band of mountain people who lived in relative peace until their land was taken over. They lived as robbers then, attacking innocent travelers that came through their mountains. One time they fell upon a small band of travelers, killing them all, but one man

¹⁰⁹ **John 11:25.** Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. **John 5:25** Verily, verily, 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 5:28** Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice.

¹¹⁰ **Mat 19:26**

¹¹¹ **Romans 10:9**

who was dying spoke to them in their own tongue. He told him he had come to set them free. That the God of Light had visited him and given him a message to bring to the people. The man died in Wantu's arms. Only days after that, a great army came and hunted Wantu and his people down and slaughtered them and took Wantu prisoner. After much time in prison, seeing the evils of war and killing and robbing, Wantu was visited by a man of God, who told him the story of Jesus.

But Wantu died shortly after.

In time, in Hell's prison with those people he had led, he found the courage to turn to the God of love and light spoken of by the traveler, and he felt remorse for the sad plight that his people were in and wanted to somehow right the wrong.

Elatia then turned to me and asked if I would lead them in prayer to receive Jesus. I was speechless. Here she was giving me this honor which she had worked for and, I imagined, had planned for herself.

In the best voice I could muster in that dark prison cell I asked them to pray the prayer with me. Somehow in the spirit world it didn't matter what language you spoke, everyone heard you in their own language.

“Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner and deserve to perish in this place, but I believe that you came to set me free from the punishment for sin, which is death. I believe that You took upon Yourself the pain and suffering



and hopeless despair, and died in my place. Then, I believe that God raised You from the dead and restored life to Your body, conquering death and Hell. Oh Jesus, please come into my heart, forgive my sins and grant me eternal life with You. Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Amen.”

I opened my eyes and beheld the most wonderful miracle. The entire group had received Jesus by faith and were filled with the Holy Spirit. These were praising God with all of their hearts and their bonds were being ripped off and cast away. It’s hard to describe the joy of seeing a soul in darkness transformed into a child of light. The blackness and darkness of despair was falling away like autumn leaves, and the spring of eternal life was bursting out everywhere.

18. Confronting the Lord of Darkness

Suddenly I felt a great sense of uncertainty about what we were attempting. It was the suffocating sense of having sinned greatly, that we were all terribly wrong and doing these people irreparable damage by giving them hope when there was no hope. Then one of the priests from the temple appeared and began to glow. His features and clothing began to change into a beautiful young man until he stood before us like an angel of light, radiating with light and stupendous beauty, and music seemed to cascade from his body.¹¹² His garments were studded with every imaginable Jewel and precious stone there was and he spoke with the softest and sweetest voice I have ever heard. But there was something unappealing in his voice, certain sub vocal sounds of pain and suffering. There were threatening tremors in his voice as though masking an overwhelming rage that could at any moment break out into wanton destruction.

I was mesmerized by the beauty of the creature and his obvious powers of persuasion. I felt like the appropriate response was to fall down and worship him. He spoke with many convincing arguments about why Jesus had abandoned them here with little hope. He presented himself as being their only hope and protector in this time of their much deserved punishment, the one that had kept them through their undeserved trials and testing. That if they could just believe in him, they too would enjoy the splendor of his presence in their lives if they would recognize him as their

¹¹² **2Corinthians 11:13-14** For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. **Ezekiel 28:13** Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

true lord and master. He revealed then some of the powers that they would receive from him. Powers to cast spells and perform miracles like Jesus. Wave after wave of enticing appeals swept the crowd drawing our hearts into great confusion and uncertainty.

How could this wonderful being that appeared as an angel of light be the author of all that is bad? Surely the image I had of Satan was an exaggeration to the negative. Could this angel of light really be the liar, murderer and thief that that Jesus warned us about¹¹³ that Isaiah says, made “the world as a wilderness, the earth tremble, and the kingdoms shake, that destroyed cities, and never opens his prisons to let his prisoner go free.”¹¹⁴

In the same seductive tone he continued his dissertation. “You think that just praying a little prayer will get you out of this mess? You are here because you shed innocent blood. Until you have paid in full for that act you will never be free from Hell and death.”

A deadly hush fell on the crowd.

I felt a surge of anger in my heart that what he said was a lie. I pointed my finger at him and said, “I rebuke you in the name of Jesus whose blood you have willingly shed and by whom we have been cleansed and set free. Your rule is a reign of terror that is about to end. Death and Hell will give up their dead and the righteous will rule forevermore. So I say in the power of our Lord Jesus, be gone and trouble us no more.”

¹¹³ **John 8:44** Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

¹¹⁴ **Isaiah 14:20**

The Devil faltered, his beauty seemed to fade and he appeared to be in great discomfort. The illusion of his invincibility had suddenly been ripped away. With a loud roar he vanished as suddenly as he had appeared.

I was moved by the power there was in simply uttering the name of Jesus. How denigrated that name had become on earth, used more as a cuss word in common speech. If only people could realize the power that that name has to cast out demons, heal the infirm, and even raise people from the dead.¹¹⁵

Elatia was already beginning to organize them into groups of ten or so. Each group was assigned a leader from among the men who had appeared to take Doeg into prison. As we started up the winding path to the surface and Temple of Death, I wondered how long it would be before the likes of Doeg would receive the Lord and be set free.

¹¹⁵ **Philipians 2:10-11** That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father. **Act 3:6** Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. **Luke 9:42-43** And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare *him*. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father. And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God.

19. A Convincing Ploy

Feeling a bit proud that I had been a part of this great venture to rescue so many from Hell, I let some of my previous lessons on the importance of staying humble slip. As I marched along triumphantly I heard a cry from somewhere in the dark.

“Help me!” It came with such deep pleading and sincerity that immediately my heart was touched. I assumed that I could do the same for this one as we had done for the others, so I rushed over to see who needed help. It was a young woman.

“Be careful,” Elatia called out to me, “These people are placed here for a good reason. Be sure she was well aware of what she was doing in life. Don’t let her fool you.”

But I seemed to know better about this woman who was appealing to my sense of chivalry, dignity and pride. Unwittingly I stepped closer and once I was within reach of her grasp she sprang at me like a cobra striking, and in an instant had me by the arm, and was trying to drag me down into that region to which she had been placed or fallen herself. Realizing the folly of my thinking too late, I began to pray desperately rebuking pride and self-righteousness. It was only with utmost effort that I managed to escape her grasp and free myself.

Elatia stood by seemingly unmoved by the incident, to which I reacted somewhat angrily. “That woman nearly dragged me into that pit with her. I thought you were here to protect and help me!” I protested.

“I tried to tell you, but you wouldn’t listen. So I had to let you find out for yourself and struggle a bit so that in the future you will not be so easily deceived. Once burned, they say you become twice as careful. I hope that old saying proves true for you.”

She was obviously chiding me, which I deserved, for taking such a big gulp of pride at my own spirituality, and for letting my carnal mind jump to the conclusion that everyone down here was salvageable, and for not trusting Elatia's discernment, and leaning to my own understanding. But all was not lost, and the incident was soon behind us, and I learned that all is not as it appears in here and the Devil will use any of our thoughts including our most noble emotions and good intentions to entrap us.

We came at last to the great green door. Again it swung open seemingly of its own accord and we marched victorious out of the Temple of Death. The priests shrieked and cut themselves at our appearance in one of the largest jail breaks they had ever witnessed since Jesus' time. One cried out, "This is the end of all things! We're undone!" and began to tear his clothes and make a loud lamenting noise.

One of the calmer young priests in the assembly uttered a sharp reprimand to the older man in distress, "Oh shut up, you melodramatic old fool." He then gave him a resounding slap on the side of his head, sending the poor fellow reeling and whimpering. "Just be thankful they didn't clean out the place and take them all away as they will someday."

20. Heading Home

We marched boldly and unimpeded into the streets of Gragau before amazed crowds of gaping people. What a spectacle we were. Even the prodders had to stop forcing souls along the road and pause while we passed.

Wantu was leading the group in songs of praise to Jesus for saving them. And the young men were also praising God for His great deliverance. Several of the onlookers were inspired enough to want to join the procession and would have, had dark hands not grabbed them and held them back.

We came at last to where the portal was. Wantu wanted to be the last one to enter, so one by one each of the other penitents entered the portal. I could see them being changed in spirit as they ascended up toward the Light. I watched until the last of the band passed through and finally Wantu himself, in tears, passed on. Finally the young men who had come with us thanked me and Elatia for coming on this adventure, then entered and disappeared.

When the last man was gone I turned to Elatia and said, “Well, there goes our mission. Now what?”

I knew in the spirit that Elatia would enter the portal herself and leave me. I wanted to go with her and a sudden wave of fear struck me at the thought that I was in Hell, far from the passageway which brought me into this world, and I had no way of getting there or even finding it. I turned to Elatia and thanked her for taking me along on this exciting journey and especially for her patience in answering my many questions. I apologized for the incident with the woman in the pit. She said that it was all part of the lessons I had to learn about life. She said that she had enjoyed my company and questions and that our parting was one of the most difficult

moments for her of the whole adventure. Then she turned as though she was going to enter the portal.

Did I really trust the Lord or did I think He would abandon me here in Hell after all that I had just been through? “Is there some plan for me to get home?” I queried, trying not to sound panicky. Surely she had some way of getting me back to my body and to live out whatever remaining time I had left in life.

Elatia must have seen the look of concern in my eyes as my faith flickered like a candle in a draft. She turned back to me and hugged me warmly again and thanked me for our special time together. Then she took out her sword. I recoiled! She laughed a little at my obvious lack of trust. But this time I was more prepared and with some reluctance I submitted to her thrusting it into me. I then experienced an overwhelming sense of wellbeing and completeness as the light filled me to overflowing. How fulfilled I felt at having been allowed to go on this mission and how thankful that Elatia had been my partner. Gradually my youthful body transformed back to its former shape. The last thing I remember was Elatia’s smiling face and her bending over me to give me a warm affectionate kiss. Then I felt myself slipping away as though I were being carried by some strong currents. A great rushing sensation surrounded me as I was transported back through the spiritual dimension to my apartment.

I awakened lying in my bed staring at the ceiling. I struggled to my feet and realized that I had just been granted a second incredible journey into the amazing world of the spirit. The wonderful spirit body I had enjoyed was now gone and I had my old self back with all its limitations. I looked over at the wall where the portal had been, but it was a wall again. The entrance to Hell was thankfully sealed over. I had just spent a day in Hell and survived. I reflected a moment on the unfathomable mercy that God

has, and the fact that no matter where a soul is, His loving presence can find and deliver them. I marveled that no matter where a soul is, even if they were dead and in the lowest parts of hell, the Lord's love can find them. As the psalmist wrote in Psalm 139, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there."

My Bible lay open beside me on the bed so I began to read random verses from John, "I am the door of the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. 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 ... And all that are in the graves shall hear ... and everyone which seeth, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."¹¹⁶

How I look forward to that day—that will be when my real journey will begin.

¹¹⁶ John 10:16; 5:25,28; 6:40