

January 2011 – Ask For The Ancient Paths Newsletter

**THE COST:**

This will be a short interim article.

I would like to thank everyone who stood with me in prayer. I rarely resort to asking for help, but the need to be covered really hit home this time. I tend to suffer these things alone out of habit, and that is wrong. We are a group – the body – not an island. Thank you for being part of the body with me.

I received 3 emails that were astounding words from God and I praise Him that we are all in this together. Yes, some of them were chastising, but they confirmed what the Lord was already saying to me. I thank you that you are hearing from the Lord and faithful to share. Because of these trials, reaching out to you, and your faithfulness, I have crossed through a barrier that I did not even know was there. It is the fulfillment of a word I received three years ago in Calgary and again last year in Chicago. There is a definite change in the air and I am trembling with excitement for this next adventure.

What is impressing me anew is the cost of this walk. I have lost friends, belongings, money, my job, my support...and finally, what was so precious to me, my electronics. And I am not alone. I receive emails on a continual basis of others who are in the same situation. And in it all, we must ask ourselves, is it worth it?

The resounding answer is, “YES!”

Luke 14:25-35 is a very good example of the cost involved and the failure to consider it. We have thought our life is magically going to be wonderful, profitable, supplying everything we desire. Well, that only happens in I Dream of Jeannie or Bewitched (am I aging myself?). I heard that the definition of a criminal is someone who wants everything for nothing – no work, no money, no time.... Christians can be criminals in the kingdom because they want everything while they continue to do what they have always done.

I heard a long time ago, “It is just like God to bless one person so they can bless another.” Although I do believe that these words are basically true, it is not how God works. Jesus, who had the ability to heal, healed only one man out of the hundreds that swarmed around the pool of Bethesda. So what is the difference? Why did He not heal everyone?

The problem is the word blessing. We think of blessing as, well, money...an abundance of money and things. That is not how God sees blessing. He sees blessing as whatever it takes to get us to the next level of this walk with Him. He sees blessing as helping us get into full relationship with Him. We need to come into alignment with His thinking.

When Elijah went to the widow and her son, he did not give them an abundance of riches. Instead, her oil and flour never ran out during the entire drought. She did not have abundant wealth, but she and her son did not starve to death. She had enough.

In the age of the early church, the patrons did not live in wealth and splendor. In fact, they sold everything bringing it together for the common good.

One of my favorite stories is that of Job. He was perhaps the wealthiest man in the area. He had children, trade, farms, land, houses, animals...everything a man could want. His life was full...he remembered to sacrifice to the Lord according to his religious faith. And it was the Lord who pointed out His servant Job to Lucifer on more than one occasion. Job lost everything. His children. His lands. His animals. His trade. Even his health as he sat on a pile of ashes scraping the puss out of his boils. All he had left was a nagging wife and friends who told him he fell into loss because of sin in his life. But God had a purpose and when that purpose was revealed and Job's life changed, everything was restored to greater than his former glory.

There is a cost to this walk. And last week showed me that the most valuable possessions I owned were not worth as much as the benefits of the walk with God. I gladly give them up for Him. And the faithfulness of His friends who wrote me and helped me deal with the purpose God wanted to reveal to me.

Susan said it best this morning. She said, "We have no idea about Kingdom Living. We still only see it in terms of the American Dream." We see each blessing bringing us one step further into the fulfillment of that American Dream. We do not understand that Kingdom Living is the mind of Christ and sacrifice for others. We see blessing only as a self-serving boost to our quality of life.

But that is NOT how God thinks nor is it His purpose. Kingdom Living is relationship, it's love, and learning to live with each other for eternity. I cannot tell you the exciting adventures that are ahead of us as we travel through the age of timelessness in the full, complete creative power of God. We will be a part of that creativity, for we will have the mind of Christ and the authority of the Bride to create right alongside our Husband. We will work hand in hand – THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY COME! We know so very little of His purpose, designed only to bring us back to God.

The sad misconception is that in God's Kingdom, money, gold, precious jewels, etc. do not have the same meaning they do here. It all has spiritual meaning pertaining to relationship, growth and the character of God. Here gold can buy or sell a person's life whereas in heaven the streets are made of gold because gold is the character of God, how He walks, not a sign of His wealth.

It is only in Lucifer's kingdom that these things mean gain and power and recognition. We continually seek after the gold and wealth and the promises of the better material life they can give us. To live in this world in the style we want to live, we need money. When broke and in need of more money, Nero discovered a way to debase the empire's silver denarius by coating a silver/copper mixture with pure silver. This brought 20% more money into Nero's coffers so he could buy more "stuff". And if the prophecies are true, this year the US Treasury will be found covering lead bars with gold to increase their coffers, so the government can buy more "stuff".

Whereas Jesus, the Creator of everything we see and know, had no home, no money, one pair of sandals, one set of clothes, perhaps a coat of some kind, and very little else. I don't ever see anywhere in the scriptures that He worried about money. Indeed, when Peter needed some, Jesus told him to go get a gold coin from a fish's mouth. And when His ministry was at its complete fullness, He was naked and hanging on a cross watching His tormentors gamble for the very few things He owned. And yet, He was blessed with a tremendous ministry that blessed many. He did not give anyone an amazing amount of wealth. He gave people freedom and truth, blessing their lives with the reality of God and His love. Indeed, He told the rich man to give all his wealth away to get into the kingdom.

God does not require of us gold and silver. But the cost of walking with Him is the highest price we will ever pay.

In the beginning, when God decided He wanted more in His life, and He did at some point, the 3 of Them sat down and had a little discussion about it. We just didn't happen. We were planned. We were thought out. We were prepared for. In Their discussion, they covered every contingency, every possible outcome, every minute detail.

My good friend, Steven, sent me to watch the Star of Bethlehem video. I watched both it and the extra feature – The Paschal Lamb (Aries). They were fascinating. What was so amazing about it, what really impressed me, was that at the very moment of Jesus' crucifixion the earth was in complete eclipse with the sun (from the perspective of the moon) and that took place precisely in the heart of the constellation Aries – the Paschal Lamb. The heavens actually declared the sacrifice of the Lamb the moment it happened, and it was displayed for the entire universe to see.

Now why would God set it up so the entire universe could see if the universe is empty space filled with planets with no life? Because it is filled with angels, and the sign was there for them to witness. It was like a giant cashier receipt that said, "PAID IN FULL."

Now stop and think for a moment. This is no small feat. Before ANYTHING was created, before one speck of space dust, asteroid, moon, planet or star was ever put into place God had to figure out the timing, to the millisecond, the rotation, movement, time index, etc. of every planetary object from every aspect of every other planetary object. And there are more star systems and planets in the universe than can be humanly comprehended. They were created for more than heat, light and gravity. It was so that absolutely everything in creation would teach us or show us something that would bring us back to God. And He did this, knowing we would need these lessons, before one quark was put into place.

Until we had computer software to simulate this for us, we had no idea that the earth would be in total eclipse with the sun at that precise moment in the heart of Aries at the time of Christ's crucifixion. But God had to plan the precise movement of every planetary object so that 8 billion years in the future the earth would be in the precise position of eclipse in the heart of Aries so the rest of the universe could witness the phenomenon.

To cut it short, there is an amazing amount of planning and intricate detail that has gone into this creation we live in. And we barely even consider it because we all have our noses to the ground just trying to survive our own personal day-to-day lives.

One of the shows I have taken an interest in is "1000 Ways To Die." Every time I watch it, I marvel at the Lord's keeping power in my life. It is absolutely incredible to me how fragile we are. How utterly helpless we are to keep ourselves alive. Not only are there an amazing number of ways to die, and very quickly sometimes, but it amazes me that our cells stay intact keeping each of us "together". I have studied molecular and sub-molecular worlds. I have seen into the depths of the smallest particle ever created, and what amazes me is there is so much space between these particles, quarks, and leptons. And yet, these incredibly minute particles come together and stay together in different configurations to create a single body, and discounting the ever increasing effect of age, that single body remains relatively the same throughout a lifespan.

God not only had to work out the math on things as large as suns and solar systems, but quarks and leptons and perhaps even smaller particles. The number of these particles in the universe in all three dimensions or heavens is beyond mind-boggling, and yet, HE ALONE KNOWS every one of them personally. He keeps an eye on every one of them personally. He keeps tabs on everything all the time, forever.

But back to the point. As the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were sitting around in their heavenly place just hanging out and deciding what they should do, they decided to create. They could have done anything they wanted but they decided to create friends and a Bride. Their creation would include different heavens (dimensions) including both spiritual and natural worlds. The “natural” laws would differ from place to place, so that had to be considered. And of course, they wanted to create angels, mankind, animals and other life. It was not just a matter of creating all these things, but they also had to consider every movement that would happen during these creations’ life spans. Further, He had to take into account every thought to pass through each creature’s mind.

There were many scenarios to consider. They could have been android-like races that would do only what they were designed to, and on cue. They could have created only one race. They could have created different life forms that were capable of different things. They could have done anything. And most of these things would carry a cost to Them, like time and effort. Stop for a moment and consider the possibilities of different types of creation and what it would cost you to look after them. Many things cost nothing, especially in the case of automatons.

For example, we keep fish in a bowl, feed it once in awhile, and voila, the cost only a few flakes of food and a few seconds of time. Dogs and cats cost a little more. Farm animals and crops, yet a little more. Everything has a price, and that price is determined by the amount of freedom and privilege of life we are willing to allow our charges. Is the dog chained up in the backyard to warn of intruders, or in the house requiring more cleaning and extra supplies.

They considered everything. Things I can’t imagine. Things beyond my scope of understanding or creative concept, and trust me, I am quite imaginative. But out of all the possibilities, they chose to create angels and mankind. Angels as the inhabitants of the spiritual realm, animals in the natural realm, and humans, the inhabitants of both. We begin in the spiritual realm, are born into the natural realm, inherit the Kingdom and become royalty of all realms during the age of New Jerusalem.

But before anything was created, God knew that to go this way, there would be a tremendous price. **There was a great price to pay for giving us free will.** And that cost was factored in, and agreed upon before even 1 single quark and lepton was ever created. Everything was planned to the absolute minutest detail. Detail we cannot even fathom. Everything was put into place. The time of payment determined, everything absolutely aligned up to the very moment that payment became due.

The detail is absolutely astonishing.

As a matter of fact, I am right now seeing that the exact moment of Christ’s crucifixion was like the narrow center point of an hour glass. In an hour glass, the sand from the top V-shaped glass trickles into the bottom V-shaped glass through a very tight center. There is exactly as much space above as below. Consider for a moment, eternity. There is as much time in future eternity as there has been in eternity past, the pivotal point being the moment of crucifixion. What does this mean? For me, I am astounded because it tells me that God existed for an eternity before He ever created us. Let’s say everything up to

the crucifixion was part of eternity past, and everything past the point of crucifixion is part of eternity future. We are living in the second part of eternity...eternity future. It is the moment when everything changed. It was the moment when all life as we know it shifted. The hour glass was flipped over. It was the moment when everything was finished and life would begin in the spiritual reality God intended. We entered a new age that would last forever...at least for those who grab onto the sacrifice and cover themselves in His precious blood.

I am overwhelmed with the impact of what I am seeing. I wish I could share this with you, but words fail me.

Everything costs. It cost God to even create us. And yet, we do not consider the cost of life. We see only the crisis before us and some of us fall into despair. We look at the storm and not to the Savior who is sleeping peacefully in the boat with us.

Job paid the price. He lost everything he ever owned. He lost his possessions, his family, his livestock, his wealth, his belongings and even his physical immunity. He had no idea of Kingdom Living until he repented and stood before God in right perspective, his self-righteousness a thing of the past. He paid the price in humility and was restored to an even greater position than before. He paid this price just to be an example to others.

Noah paid the price. He lost everything he knew and was shut up in a boat with a bunch of animals. There are more than 1,700 species of animals in the world so that meant that he had approximately 6,226 animals in the ark. There are 9,084 species of reptiles (18,168 in the ark). And something we never think about, he also had to have all the insects and birds with him. There are over 3,000,000+ insects in the world and 40,000+ birds (280,000 birds in the ark). His boat was full and he had to tend to these creatures 24/7. He walked out into a new world, quickly lost his son, only to watch this new world follow the path of the old one. He paid the price of his walk. He paid this price so he could start the world over again.

Abraham paid the price. He lost his home, his family, his son.... He paid this price so he could be the father of the chosen people.

Joseph paid the price. He lost his family, became a slave, was imprisoned and betrayed...all because he was to save the Hebrew people.

The Hebrew people paid the price. They prayed and prayed, wailing for freedom from their oppressors. But they wanted freedom their way. They wanted freedom to live like the Egyptians. They wanted the ever sought after "Egyptian Dream", so to speak. They wanted to enjoy the pyramids and temples instead of sweating to build them. But let's look at how God answered their prayer and gave them freedom.

The plagues were:

- 1. The plague of blood – all the land of Egypt**
- 2. The plague of frogs – all the land of Egypt**
- 3. The plague of gnats – all the land of Egypt**
4. The plague of flies – only the Egyptians
5. The plague of pestilence – only the Egyptians
6. The plague of boils – only the Egyptians

7. **The plague of hail – all the land of Egypt**
8. The plague of locusts – only the Egyptians
9. **The plague of darkness – all the land of Egypt**
10. The plague of the death of the first born – on everyone not covered by the blood of the lamb

A friend pointed out that 5 of the plagues were for everyone in Egypt, while 5 were strictly for the Egyptians. I didn't realize that they were interspersed. I was stumped. I was looking at them the way everyone looks at them. I was complicating them (you have all read my book) by examining to the n<sup>th</sup> degree. But when I finally gave up last night, the Lord said, "Look at them simply." And then it dawned on me. Everything that was attacked by plague was what God gave universally to mankind.

1. The plague of blood
  - a. In the Nile
    - i. all the land of Egypt
      1. **BRINGS LIFE TO THE LAND**
      2. **Without God there is no life and the land is barren and a desert**
  - b. In the streams
    - i. all of the land of Egypt
      1. **BRINGS LIFE TO THE PEOPLE**
      2. **Without God there is no water and the people perish from thirst**
2. The plague of frogs
  - a. all the land of Egypt
    - i. **RELATIONSHIP**
    - ii. **Without a right heart there is no relationship, comfort, consolation**
3. The plague of gnats
  - a. all the land of Egypt
    - i. **PEACE OF BODY**
    - ii. **Without God there is no peace of mind, soul or body**
4. The plague of flies
  - a. only the Egyptians
    - i. **THE BLOOD**
    - ii. **Without God the blood is infected and diseased**
    - iii. **The Hebrews were to be under the blood of sacrifice, forgiven**
5. The plague of pestilence
  - a. only the Egyptians
    - i. **ANIMALS AND LIVESTOCK**
    - ii. **Without God there is no shelter (tents), clothes (hides), sacrifice (forgiveness)**
    - iii. **The Hebrews needed their cattle to sacrifice in the Tabernacle**
6. The plague of boils
  - a. only the Egyptians
    - i. **FLESH**
    - ii. **Without God we cannot even sustain ourselves, our own flesh**
    - iii. **The Hebrews were to be spotless and without sin**
7. The plague of hail/fire
  - a. on the land of Egypt
    - i. **ORCHARDS AND CROPS**
    - ii. **Without God we do not even have the very life sustaining essentials He first gave us**

- iii. **A reflection on the Garden of Eden**
- 8. The plague of locusts
  - a. only the Egyptians
    - i. **VEGETATION**
    - ii. **Without God we do not even have the very life sustaining essentials He first gave us**
    - iii. **A reflection on the Garden of Eden**
- 9. The plague of darkness
  - a. all the land of Egypt
    - i. **LIFE GIVING LIGHT**
    - ii. **Without the light of the world, all live in complete, utter darkness**
- 10. The plague of the death of the first born
  - a. on everyone not covered by the blood of the lamb
    - i. **THEIR FUTURE (sons) and in some cases, THEIR PAST (fathers)**
    - ii. **Without God, there is no future**
    - iii. **Jesus, His first begotten Son, was given as a sacrifice so all would live. The sacrifice of the first born of the land of Egypt profited nothing**

Basically, God took away everything He had given them. Food, water, sun, animals, peace and even relationship. Who could touch anyone or anything with slimy frogs all over everything?. The only thing that was left to the Egyptians was gold, silver, jewels, temples, buildings...these things were the work of their own hands and were useless to them; these things could not purchase comfort or sustain life. They could not stop the plague with a piece of gold. Go ahead and try to bribe a frog or a fly with a silver coin. They could offer no prayer in their temples that would reach the ears of God. They were left with only the works of their own hands and the things they thought were precious. Those things profited them nothing in the grand scheme of things when God withdrew His blessings. Sadly, they realized what was truly precious too late, only after it was gone.

Egypt plunged into a financial crisis, their economy in a tailspin. Their world was shaken. Without God, they had nothing and could not sustain themselves. They were helpless to turn things around. And so they gave all their gold, silver, jewels and precious things to the Hebrews to encourage them to leave, hoping the plagues would stop once they were gone.

The Hebrews, praying for their freedom, paid the price by experiencing those plagues. They shared some of them, heard the screams, smelled the stink, and witnessed the horrors on the land.

That was the price of release from the 400 year-old mindset of slavery and bondage. They prayed for freedom but they were not prepared for freedom because they had no a concept of what freedom meant. For most of them, perhaps it was staying in bed later in the morning instead of having to trudge off to the mud pit for a thankless taskmaster, the concept was simply to control their own life. This is witnessed by the fact that they whined about returning to Egypt at the first sign of discomfort while wandering through the desert. They now had to learn "Who is God", "What will He do?", "What can He do"?, "Where is He?". They needed some faith lessons. They had to go through an unfamiliar learning process.

Interestingly enough, I suspect not all of them wanted to go. I suspect that the Egyptians insisted they go. They moaned and complained each step of the way. Very much like we do. They wanted the Egyptian Dream, not Promised Land living. The price was just too high for some.

It is very odd. I have paid some pretty hefty prices in my life for each inch of ground I have gained. But it has never bothered me. But when the attack began to interfere with what was precious to me, that was when I reached out and asked for help. But nothing is to be held onto. That is the price. Everything must be given up. Each test deepens my commitment by showing me the real value Christ has paid for me.

The man had to sell everything he had to purchase the field with the treasure in it while another sells everything he had to purchase a precious pearl.

We have difficulty with these concepts. In these days the repo guy shows up to take our furniture, cars and homes. But, like the children of Israel, we are losing everything old to go to a better place, to be free from the bondage and slavery of servitude. And debt is servitude, bondage and slavery. In fact, the term mortgage comes from the French words *gage...to pledge* and *mort...till death*.

Oddly enough, we forget, that the same Hebrew people who lost everything they had in Egypt, which were indeed meager possessions at best, were to gain everything in the Promised Land. They gained houses they did not build, crops they did not plant, land they did not buy, animals they did not breed, cities they did not build, etc. Their inheritance far exceeded their present condition.

Yes there is a price to pay for this unknown walk that takes us by the hand step-by-step. And I am fine with that. It does not matter the price. The prize is our relationship with our Creator and that is my goal. Nothing else matters. I will not go through this journey complaining and muttering about the cost.

We have lost our houses, our income, our families, our friends...everything. Well, some of us have. The Lord does different things with different people and it all depends on priority, what are we tied to, what is most important to us, and where do we need freedom. But the Lord is using these things to free us from bondages. He is breaking us free from the bondage of debt, the bondage of slavery, the bondage of drudgery. He is breaking us free from the hold of the enemy so that we can walk into Kingdom Living which is not like we imagine, not like the familiar past to which we cling so desperately.

The “blab it and grab it” and “name it and claim it” ways of thinking are not going to cut it.

I was driving to Future Shop to pick-up my backup hard drive. And the tears began to stream down my face as I saw the suffering a dear friend has endured. Her body has been damaged and crippled. Her emotions have been crushed. Her spirit has been wounded. Her innocence and life have been stolen. She has been lost and hurt for years. But her calling is to write music that will turn the hearts of those who listen to their God. I see her music, her compositions, rise up and flow out to the listeners like living water, and it flows around and through the people touching hearts and healing/cleansing wounds. She will reach the world with her music and the sounds will bring them before the Lord. But this type of music has a price. If she was just going to write music, the cost would be negligible. Our ears are inundated with the sounds of musicians who write just for the sake of writing music for fame and fortune. But to write the music that would turn the hearts of the world toward God, she needed to know that pain the world feels. She needed to be able to know it and feel it so she could touch it. It was the price she would have to pay to reach the hearts of the people.

I have paid a price for every word I write. And I would not have it any other way. I pay that price willingly. Just like Paul who paid the price of his ministry. The price to see the truth about Jesus was to be struck blind. The price of reaching the Jewish people with the gospel of Christ was to be stoned and

drowned and hunted down...by the Jewish people. The price all the Apostles had to pay to spread the gospel was to be crucified, boiled in oil, beheaded, etc. The price the Christians had to pay in the early church was to be burned alive or fed to the lions. The price every generation has had to pay has been dear. They have been burned as witches, ostracized and abandoned. They have been murdered, tortured and maimed. They have paid a price for every soul that was rescued and every heart that was turned. The cost of torture, death, imprisonment and more continues today in the underground church of communist and Islamic countries. My price has been very little in comparison.

And some of you have paid a price just for being my friend. I know this and it hurts me.

My dear ones, embrace the price God has put before you. Painful for the moment, it is nothing in the long run. As Jesus upon the cross, the nails in His hands and feet, the weight of His body collapsing in on Him, the men before Him gambling for what little was left to Him of worldly possessions, the world gazing on His nakedness, unable to help, the hordes of hell watching the event with their feet up eating popcorn, believing they had won the greatest victory....and Jesus mustered the strength to say..."Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Father God, I pray for Your grace to wash over each and every one of us so that we can, as Christ did, graciously accept the cost and pay the price You have set before us. In Jesus' most precious and holy name, amen.

God bless you all abundantly, now and forever  
Jessica