**Explanation of the Painting, The Lord’s Garden, as Seen on the**

 **Webpage of Encouraging the Nations**

 My friend, Karen Spalding, painted the painting, featured on my web page of an open vision I had on March 20, 1991, during a revival service led by Ruth Ward Heflin at Calvary Campground in Ashland, Virginia. Following is an explanation of what I saw and heard the Holy Spirit speak to me. I believe this is a poignant description of the Gospel message and of the calling on my life. The vision is in bold, and the explanation follows.

 **I saw** **a magnificent garden. It was so beautiful and had trees filled with life-giving fruit, with flowers that have beauty for ashes and with fragrances beyond the imagination. The flowers were pollinated with the gold dust of angels who encamp around those who love the Lord, protecting them.**

 **Then I saw a huge fountain of living water, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God. It was bubbling up and running over with life. There was healing for the nations, cleansing from sin and joy for mourning.** **To the left of the fountain, I saw flames of fire and a cross, covered with red roses. Above the Fountain of Living Water, I saw angels in the sky. In the sky I saw much light, especially pink light.**

 **I understood that the living Bread of Life was in the garden, providing our sustenance, our strength, our victory and our abundance**.

 **Outside the garden, I saw an old wagon with four wooden wheels and one wheel to the right side of the fountain. It was filled with four burlap bags. Lying on the burlap bags was a spotless, white flower. Behind the wagon, there was a young girl dressed in red and white. One hand was lifted in praise. The other hand was on top of the burlap bags and the white flower**.

When we experience the presence of God, we come into the Lord’s Garden as His trees of righteousness. It’s like coming into a magnificent garden filled with trees and life-giving fruit. Psalm 92: 12-15 (NKJV) sheds light on the significance of this garden and how it offers a picture of God’s plan for the godly, the righteous. It says that the godly shall flourish and grow tall like a palm tree and like a cedar tree in Lebanon.

 According to *Dake’s Annotated Reference Bible*, palm trees are watered deep at the roots and provide for many needs: diet (dates), baskets (leaves), ropes (threads of the leaves), building material and firewood (wood). The cedars of Lebanon may be as old as 1,000 years and grow 80 to 100 feet tall and 40 feet around the trunk.[[1]](#footnote-1)

 *The Amplified Bible* compares the righteous to these trees saying that they shall be useful, fruitful, majestic, stable, durable and incorruptible. Even in their old age, they shall be full of spiritual vitality, demonstrating that the Lord is upright and faithful in His promises. The righteous shall also be transplanted into the Lord’s own garden (house) in order to be under His personal care. [[2]](#footnote-2)2

 In the Lord’s Garden there are also spectacular flowers with beauty for ashes and fragrances beyond imagination. The flowers in God’s kingdom are pollinated with gold dust, crowned with glory, and spectacular beyond what we can comprehend. Beauty for ashes is mentioned in Isaiah 61: 3 when Isaiah prophesied of the Messiah’s coming and of His mission. Isaiah said the Lord would be anointed to bestow on His people a crown of beauty for ashes, delivering them from discouragement. He said that His people would be called oaks of righteousness from which He would receive glory, just as He received glory from all of the plants in His garden which He had created and caused to grow.

 As oaks of righteousness, God’s people have been given responsibility to share with others about the Messiah and His mission.. According to Matthew 28: 18-21, believers are to walk in the Messiah’s authority, sharing the Gospel and making disciples of the nations. The ashes mentioned in Isaiah 61 are exchanged for beauty and salvation when God’s people repent. Proverbs 11: 30 echoes the importance of this responsibility when it says: “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise,” especially when they also bear life-giving fruit.

 In the middle of the magnificent garden, there was a fountain of living water. According to **Revelation 22: 1-2**, the fountain was as clear as crystal and proceeded from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of the street and on either side was the tree of life which bore twelve crops of fruits each month for the healing of the nations. **John 4: 14** describes this fountain of living water as springing up with everlasting life. **John 7: 38** teaches that Jesus is the Living Water from whom rivers of living water will flow from the innermost being of those who believe in Him. When they have reverence for the Lord, it is a fountain of life that turns them away from death and toward life (**Proverbs 14: 27**). Today we can approach this throne through prayer.

 **Zechariah 13: 1** speaks of a fountain which will be opened to the people of Israel and Jerusalem, and which will cleanse them from sin and uncleanness. When the people choose to no longer forsake the fountain of living water, they will be cleansed.

 To the left of the fountain, there were flames of fire, symbolizing holiness, the presence of God, His Shekinah glory and His power. **I Corinthians 3: 13** says that all of our works will be tried by fire, revealing the nature of the fire. **I** **Peter 1: 7** says that the trial of our faith is much more precious than gold which perishes. Just as a silversmith uses fire to purge the dross from the metal, our goal as believers must be to have faith that is genuine like gold that has been purified in the fire, causing our sin to be removed from us. In **Psalm 66: 10**, David says that once we have been refined, having been through fire and water, then God brings us to rich fulfillment. This genuine faith will bring praise, honor and glory to God.

 In **Malachi 3: 1-3**, Malachi describes the coming of the Lord, the Messenger of the Covenant Who will purify His people so that they may present themselves as offerings in righteousness. Malachi asks the question, “But who can endure the day of His coming? Who can stand when He appears?” He describes the Lord as a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap. As believers, we need to be purified, even though it may be a challenging process. Peter said: “But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy’” (**I Peter 1: 15-16**).

 Once we have repented and been purified, we must ask to receive the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. **Matthew 3: 11** reads:

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.”

 In **Matthew 3: 1** theinfluence of the Holy Ghost is likened unto fire, which is a manifestation of God. In **Acts 2: 3-4**, the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples in the Upper Room was denoted by the appearance of tongues as of fire:

 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one

 sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy

 Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave

 them utterance.

In **Hebrews 12: 29**, God is described as a consuming fire. Fire often appears as a symbol of God’s presence and of the Shekinah glory. An example of this is found in **Numbers 9: 15-16** when the tabernacle was raised up. A cloud covered the tabernacle by day and appeared by night as fire. This fiery presence provided light and guidance.

 Likewise, in Judges 13: 20, when the Angel of the Lord told Manoah’s wife that she would bear a son, Samson, Manoah and his wife prepared an offering of a young goat and grain. As the flame of the offering went up to heaven, the Angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. When Manoah and his wife realized how holy this experience was, they fell on their faces. The fire symbolized the power and holiness of the Angel of the Lord.

 A similar situation occurred when Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal with a burnt sacrifice on stones and dust covered with water (I Kings 18: 38-39). The fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice. When everyone saw this happen, they fell on their faces, acknowledging God as the only true god. His fire is to be taken seriously. When we are purified through His fire, then we may truly be used to win the lost, heal the sick, cast out demons and disciple other believers.

 In the vision to the left of the Fountain of Living Water, there was a cross, covered with red roses. The importance of the cross can be seen in **Romans 5: 8** which says that God demonstrated His love toward us in that while we were sinners, His Son shed His blood and died for us on the cross. **Romans 10: 9-10** tells us that if we will confess with our mouths and believe in our hearts that Jesus died on the cross and was raised by God from the dead, we will be saved. **Acts 20: 21** says that we must turn to God repenting of our sins and have faith in Jesus Christ. When we invite Jesus into our hearts to be our Lord and Savior, we can be certain that we are saved and He cares for us; for **I Peter 5: 7** tells us that when we cast our cares upon Him, He cares for us. He cares so much that He resides in heaven, interceding for us.

 Once we surrender our lives to Jesus, we must walk with the Lord studying and memorizing the Word and praying. In Ephesians 6: 17-18, Paul teaches that we are also to pray in the Spirit.

 In the chapter, *The Other Tree* in the book, The Book of Miracles, Jonathan Cahn discusses the wooden cross in more detail. He suggests that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden was a living tree, the fruit of which man was not to partake and through which sin and death began. The cross was the second tree which was wooden and not alive. Cahn contends that this was the tree through which sin ended and life returned. [[3]](#footnote-3)

 The red roses on the cross symbolize the blood of Jesus shed for the remission of our sin. Roses have thorns. In the story, *King of the Curse*, Jonathan Cahn discusses the crown of thorns worn by the Messiah.[[4]](#footnote-4) Generally, a crown is made of gold and jewels and symbolizes royalty, power, kingship, wealth and glory. The thorns, however, remind us of the fall of man where the consequence was the curse where the ground would now grow thorns and yield, “pain, piercing, blood, tears, and destruction,” instead of the fruit it was called to bear. With the crown of thorns, the Messiah became the King of Thorns and the King of the Curse, meaning that He would bear the pain and tears of man. He would be pierced and die. Then crowns also represent authority under which anyone now would be able to come to him for joy instead of sorrow and life instead of death and corruption.

 Above the Fountain of Living Water, there were many angels and much pink light. **John 12: 46** declares that Jesus is the Light of the World: “I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in me should not abide in darkness.”

**I John 5: 7** reminds us that: “If we walk in that light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” In **John 8: 12** Jesus declared that He is the Light of the World and that we should follow Him.

 When we follow Him, we let our own lights shine. Just as Jesus showed compassion and let His light shine, so must we. We are not to hide our light or to give into Satan’s devices, which destroy our lights. We are to help lead others out of the darkness to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior and to help them lift their burdens to the Light of the World. Much of the light was pink, representing the love that Jesus has for us as the Light of the World.

 In this vision, there are angels like the ones mentioned in **Psalm 34: 7**. The Word says that angels come to help deliver believers from their burdens: “The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him and delivers them. “ In **Psalm 91: 11-12**, David says that God gives His angels charge over us to keep us in all of our ways. They lift us up lest we dash our feet against stones. They are always protecting us. **Hebrews 1: 14** says that angels are ministering spirits sent to those who will inherit salvation.

 In the Bible, there are numerous examples of angels ministering to people. For example, an angel came to Joseph to tell him not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife. Angels minister to people today in many different ways such as delivering an important message of giving, protection, and comfort.

 Not only did I see the Fountain of Living Water, but I knew that Jesus is both the Living Water and the Bread of Life (**John 6: 35**). He is the One who provides for us fruit, water, strength, eternal life and all other sustenance. When we pray the Lord’s Prayer in **Matthew 6: 11**, we ask the Lord to give us our daily bread, which He does. **Matthew 4: 4** teaches that we must depend not only on physical bread, but also on spiritual bread, every word which comes from the mouth of God. It is the Bread of Life, the Living Bread, who provides the victory and abundance for us (**Psalm 36: 7-8**).

 To the right of the Fountain of Living Water, there is a wheel that represents a circle of love that envelops the people who true believers encounter when they answer the call to share the Gospel with love in their hearts. The four wheels represent the directions believers will go to share the Gospel throughout the world--north, south, east and west. To the left of the Fountain of Living Water is a wagon filled with burlap bags representing the burdens of all people. When believers come to His garden with prayer, praise, and love, the Lord will lift these burdens and turn them into blessings, whether the burdens are emotional, physical or spiritual.

 Standing behind the wagon in the painting is a girl, dressed in red and white because she accepted the gift of salvation—the greatest gift ever given. When she accepted this gift, Jesus offered her right standing with Him--righteousness, represented by her white clothing. Her right hand is raised in praise. Our victory is in our praise. Her left hand is on the burlap bags near the spotless white flower, symbolizing carrying the burdens of the people to Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Savior of the world

 In the vision, the left hand began to feel like a dead weight while her right hand felt as light as a feather. In **Isaiah 61: 4** Isaiah says that the Messiah will give us a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. We are no longer weighed down with the cares of the world because **Matthew 11: 30** says, “ My burden is light, and My yoke is easy.” Through the work of the Messiah, the cares of the world begin to feel as light as a feather.

 When our burdens are taken to the cross in tears, God transforms our lives and the lives of those for whom we’re praying. He transformed the life of the woman who anointed Christ’s feet with the oil from the alabaster flask and with her tears (**Matthew 26: 7**). He honored her faith and transformed her tears to living water. He forgave her and saved her, sending her forth in peace. One day, there will be no more burdens, no more tears and no more pain. **Hebrews 4: 15-16** reads:

 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without

 sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we

 may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

When we lift our burdens to Jesus, our High Priest, he will have compassion and extend mercy and grace for our needs. He expects us to be His hands and feet, extending His compassion to others as we help them to lift their burdens and to find peace. James 3: 18 tells us that “…the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”

 In *The Lord’s Garden,* believers are to be led by the Holy Spirit and to walk in His presence. In the garden, the Messiah--the Living Water, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, our High Priest, the King of Kings and the Savior of the world guides us, demonstrating His compassion, mercy and grace so that we can be His hands and feet, extending compassion to others. Be Encouraged, in the Lord’s Garden, there are joy, love, peace, joy, comfort, salvation, provision, cleansing, beauty, strength, compassion, mercy, grace and victory. He is our King of Kings and to Him we give our praise, our honor and our glory!

1 Finis Jennings Dake, *Dake’s Annotated Reference Bible*

 (Lawrenceville, Dake Publishing, Inc., 2001),1046.

2 The Holy Bible, Amplified Version (Grand Rapids, Zondervan

 Publishing, 1987), 525.

3 Jonathan Cahn, The Book of Mysteries (Lake Mary, FrontLine, 2016), 72.

4. Ibid, 25.

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)