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The Winepress of God's Wrath

“And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe“
(Revelation 14:15).

“Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great” (Joel 3:13).

The winepress of God's wrath is a metaphor for the punishment of the wicked on the Day of Atonement. It is the final event of the six thousand years of man: a sort-of final house-cleaning before the start of the Millennial Kingdom. It occurs on the last of the 10 Days of Awe.

The Harvest of the Grapes

The seven Feasts of the Lord of Leviticus 23 are associated with agricultural harvests in Israel. The

Spring Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits were related to the barley harvest. Christ rose from the dead literally on the Feast of First Fruits: “*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept*” (1 Corinthians 15:20). Pentecost was associated with the spring wheat harvest, and celebrated by the baking of two loaves of leavened bread representing both Jews and the Gentiles (Judah and Israel) together as the followers of Christ in the newly formed church.

The Fall Feasts of Teru ‘ah (Trumpets) and Yom Kippur (Atonement) are associated with the fall wheat harvest and the grape harvest respectively.

The harvest of the wheat represents the resurrection and rapture of the Bride of Christ on the Feast of Trumpets. Believers in Christ are the “wheat” (Matthew 13:24-30).

The harvest of the grapes represents the crushing of the wicked beneath the feet of Christ as will be described below.

The Lord's Supper as a *Moed* for the Rapture and Wrath

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD [Moedim] which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations[Miqra], even these are my feasts [Moedim]” Leviticus 23:1-2

The Hebrew word *moed* (plural *moedim*) means an appointed day or time. The word *Miqra* means rehearsal. Thus, the Feasts of the Lord are appointed times designed to be prophetic rehearsals for the first and second coming of Christ. The rituals associated with these holidays identify the clues to their fulfillment. For example, the Feast of Unleavened Bread is celebrated with the motzah wafer of unleavened bread, pierced and striped, just as sinless Christ was pierced and striped for our transgressions (Isaiah 53:5). The Hebrew ritual of burying and then resurrecting the “middle motzah” in the Passover celebration is a rehearsal for the death and resurrection of Christ.

Jesus established only one ritual for His followers during His earthly ministry: what we call The Lord’s Supper, or Communion (Luke 22:14-20). I contend that this ritual is also a *moed* and a *miqra*.

If we consider the bread to represent the wheat harvest (resurrection and rapture) on Yom Teru’ah and the wine to represent the grape harvest (punishment of the wicked) on Yom Kippur, we can recognize the Lord’s Supper as an appointed time that serves as a rehearsal for His second coming.

The Return of Christ “*To Judge and Make War*”

Before we discuss the winepress, let’s first set the stage of the context of Christ’s return, looking backward from the Day of Atonement and reviewing some of what we’ve learned.

On Yom Teru’ah (Trumpets) Christ had appeared in the clouds to call up the Bride of Christ from the earth:

“Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end

of the heavens to the other” (Matthew 24:30-31).

With the righteous then removed, the 10 Days of Awe/Wrath began, with its series of increasing punishments represented in the Bowl Judgments of Revelation 16: *“Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, ‘Go, pour out the seven bowls of God’s wrath on the earth’”* (v.1).

But the wicked would not repent (v.11) but instead gather to make war against God’s Holy City, Jerusalem, as John writes in verses 12-16:

“The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East. I saw three impure spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are demonic spirits that perform signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty...Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.”

This is the army of 200 million men (like a plague of locusts on the land), described in Revelation 9:13-21, for, as we have noted above, the bowl judgments are contained within the Sixth Trumpet, like a wheel within a wheel.

From the Valley of Armageddon, the mighty army of the wicked, cursing and blaspheming God, marches on Jerusalem. This is described in Zechariah 14:1-5:

“A day of the Lord is coming, Jerusalem, when ...I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city. Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights on a day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south. You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.”

And in Joel 2:1-2

“Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand— a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. Like dawn spreading across the mountains a large and mighty army comes, such as never was in ancient times nor ever will be in ages to come.”

God’s response to this army of the wicked is the winepress, the harvest of the grapes, but first He rescues the faithful remnant of His people from Jerusalem, just as He rescued His people from Egypt.

The Exodus Pattern in the Winepress Story

In Egypt, God brought 10 plagues against the Egyptians that represented an escalating series of judgments upon them, in a close parallel to the bowl judgments of the 10 Days of Awe. Several of the symbols of the Exodus judgment are repeated during those 10 days: blood (Exodus 7:20, Revelation 16:3-6), frogs (Exodus 8:6, Revelation 16:13-14), sores (Exodus 9:10, Revelation 16:2), darkness (Exodus 10:21, Revelation 16:10-11), etc.

But even more interesting is the parallel of the exodus flight itself. Just as the Hebrews (and others who

had chosen to flee with them -- Exodus 12:37-38) were pursued by the wicked Egyptians as they fled eastward, so does a mixed multitude flee the City of Jerusalem eastward upon the return of Christ:

“On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south. You will flee by my mountain valley..” (Zechariah 14:4-5)

The Lord Jesus, returning with the Host of Heaven, will split the Mount of Olives just as God parted the Red Sea in Exodus 14:21-28.

And just as God collapsed the Red Sea upon the pursuing Egyptians, killing every one of them, so will the Lord Yeshua Hamashiach kill the wicked who pursue His people who flee through the Valley of the Mount of Olives:

“Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights on a day of battle... the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.” (Zechariah 14:3)

This crushing of the wicked by the Lord is the Winepress of Wrath. Watch it unfold in the following passages:

Revelation 19:11-21:

*“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. **And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood:** and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: **and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.** ... And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army... And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth.”*

This same scene is described with even more detail in Revelation 14:15-20:

*“And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. **And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.**”*

Thus, does the Lord of Hosts create a Red Sea of the blood of the very army of the wicked who expected in the depths of their insanity to defeat God by destroying His holy city and His chosen people.



Fundamentals of End-Time Prophecy

Eschatology 101A

A Certificate Program of Redemption Gate Bible College

In the Spring of 2015, I developed a 5-week class on prophecy for Redemption Gate Bible College. This newsletter will feature the material from that class over the next year as I work to refine and strengthen it for use as a correspondence course. To that end I solicit your input.

The original course featured 35 questions (seven in each class session) which were asked and answered during an interactive discussion period.

We will address one or more of those (and likely additional) questions each week in this segment of the newsletter.

Session 1: The Context for Understanding Prophecy

(Questions 6 of 7)

6. When did the "End Time" Begin?

The Bible identifies the “end time” as a season of time represented three different ways: As

- 1) the Betrothal Period of the Bride of Christ,
- 2) the Age of the Gentiles, and
- 3) the “Last Days” of the creation week.

The Betrothal Period of the Bride of Christ

The betrothal begins with the very birth of the church and ends with the return of Christ, the Groom, for His bride at the second coming on Yom Teru'ah (The Feast of Trumpets).

The birth of the church and its association with the last days is addressed in the recounting of the Christian Pentecost in Acts 2:14 -16:

"But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: "Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. "For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:

"It will come about in the last days That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions."Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days."I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire and columns of smoke. "The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood Before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. "And it will come about that whoever calls

on the name of the LORD Will be delivered;(Joel 2:28-32).

Peter is stating expressly and unequivocally that the last days had begun with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as manifested in the bubbling-forth of the truth of God in the form of “tongues.”

This event is the very birth of the church, the Bride of Christ.

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish....This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Ephesians 5: 25-32).

Whose betrothal ends with the wedding:

“Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:7-9 -- immediately proceeding the return of Christ as King to claim His throne in Jerusalem).

The Age of the Gentiles

The ministry of Christ was first limited to the House of Israel

“These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:5-6). And again at a later date, Jesus declared “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matthew 15:24).

Importantly the House of Israel is distinct and separate from the House of Judah. The “Jews” (meaning Judeans of the House of Judah) and the non-Hebrew Gentiles were not the target of evangelism until Jesus issued the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20, just prior to His ascension. The actual outreach to the Jews began with the birth of the Church under Peter (Acts 2) and to the Gentiles by Paul about 3 years later.

Unlike the House of Judah, the House of Israel had been divorced by God (Jeremiah 3:1-17, esp. v.8) and needed special intervention to be restored. The Jews were presumed by Jesus not to need this intervention, since their Torah studies and Mosaic rituals were designed to point directly to Him as Messiah. Indeed, He told the disciples and the crowd “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach” (Matthew 23:2-3). Until the giving of the Holy Spirit after Messiah’s death and resurrection, the law of Moses remained effective as a means of pleasing God for those who actually followed it -- and did in fact lead some Jews to Christ (e.g Nicodemus, John 7:50).

But when the House of Judah (the Fig Tree) at last refused to accept Him, Jesus cursed it with desolation in Matthew 23:37-39:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem [capitol of Judea], thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

Yet, that curse would last only until the “fullness of the Gentiles” has come in, as indeed the entire chapter of Romans 11 culminates in this verse:

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins” (Romans 11:25-27).

The Age of the Gentiles thus began about 3 ½ years after the birth of the church and ends with the return of Christ to redeem “all Israel” on the Day of Atonement.

The Last Days of the Creation Week

The first advent of Christ occurred roughly at the completion of the first 4000 years since the creation, which was the end of the 4th millennial “day.” There were then three days remaining of 1000 years each: two more days for man, then a final Sabbath day, the Millennial Kingdom.

The prophecy of Hosea looked forward to that first coming of Christ as the time when He would reach out with healing hands to both the House of Israel and the House of Judah:

“Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight” (Hosea 6:1-2).

This describes the roughly 2000 year lifesspan of the church, followed by the Millennial Kingdom.

The betrothal period, the Gentile age, and the “last days,” thus each describe the same period of time, except that the very last “day” continues after both the wedding feast and fullness of the Gentiles are completed.

When then did the “end time” begin? Our preferred answer is:

When the Holy Spirit entered the members of the early church at Pentecost.



The Woman and the Serpent
"The Cast of Characters

How does he pick his targets, that ancient and exceedingly venomous adversary of our souls? Does he zero in on the most innocent and vulnerable? Does he give priority to the mighty and those who lust for power? Is he mostly found tempting the public sinners and notable scoundrels? Of course, since he is

an equal-opportunity tempter. But for the big jobs, the profoundly evil works that change the course of mankind's progress on this planet, he has a more refined and far-seeing strategy. He picks the way God picks. He gauges the potential of each soul.

There in the garden, he seethed with the double rage of having been fired from his job (and destined for eternal fire) and having watched the creation of his “replacement,” the two beings who embodied God's great plan and drew His eternal loving attention. How could they be suborned and defiled, to the ruin of the Creator's intentions? He saw that the first one was created to have some possibly usable qualities; he had an apparent liking for authority and the use of rules, he was action-oriented and enjoyed the work of the garden and the identification of the beasts, he seemed to be a problem-solver. Most promising was his ecstatic, no, visceral reaction when the second one was created – this might provide something for a tempter to get his claws into. Yet for purely strategic reasons, the evil one's eye was attracted to the second human, the female one, because of her tempting array of predispositions:

...the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom...

Now here was a creature with qualities to work with, when designing a sales campaign to induce bona fide rebellion against God's only negative commandment. She appreciated good food and was drawn to beauty, two points in her favor since the temptation concerned fruit. But best of all, she desired wisdom. She processed things internally and realized the power of information, and she was not too choosy about where she found her sources (after all, she listened to a snake). So the choice fell on Human #2. Certain that the woman would be swayed by sensory attractions, and that he could close the deal using her desire to gain wisdom, Satan embarked on a three-stage program to bring about the Fall:

- 1) Inject confusion into the human's mind
- 2) Find out how much this human knows
- 3) Present an exciting mixture of truth and falsehood, targeting the human's desire for wisdom

Having knocked the woman off her guard by asking her if God had forbidden her to eat from “any” tree rather than “the” tree, the serpent used her answer to learn the weakness in her information set: she had either mis-heard or mis-remembered the instruction relayed to her by the man, or perhaps he had changed it in the telling; she thought that they must neither eat nor touch the fruit. Now the time was ripe for injecting some attractive falsehood into the confusion and self-doubt that his victim had stumbled into:

The serpent said to the woman, *“You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*

Gen. 3:3-5

Would the humans surely die? YES! (serpent's statement false) Would their eyes be opened the day they ate from the tree? YES! (serpent's statement true) Would they be like God in knowing good and evil? YES! (serpent's statement true) So, two-thirds accurate information, one-third disinformation.

Notice that the true information is used to make the tempting behavior sound more tempting: don't you want to know more, have your eyes opened, know good and evil just like God (never mind that they had no idea what “evil” was, having known only good in the garden)? The false statement has to do with taking away the consequences of sin (don't worry about it, you won't die), and it is carefully placed right up front, to lessen any resistance to the alluring, positive and true statements. The serpent dares not go so far as to claim that “God knows” the false statement to be true, as he does for the other two statements. All of his attempts to discredit God are unstated or oblique. The woman must infer from the first statement -- that she will not surely die -- that God has outright deceived her and the man, for the

command was crystal clear:

“...but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.” Genesis 2:17

And if (the woman will reason) God knows that the humans' eyes will be opened and that they will possess this (apparently desirable) knowledge of good and evil which He possesses, then He is deliberately withholding a useful thing from them. And why would He do that? Well, the serpent implied that God would not like the humans to be “like Him,” with all the attendant ideas of selfishness and jealously preserved superiority of which Satan himself surely accused God in his traitor's heart:

“But you [Satan, personified as the King of Tyre] said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' “Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit.” Isaiah 14:13-15

So the woman follows these insidious suggestions with her own reason, and suddenly she has a self-interest. The serpent has brought her to the point of doubting and mistrusting God, and now she feels she must take care of herself (and the man); she will evaluate the fruit of this tree, not on God's say-so, but on her own perception of its goodness, its attractiveness, and its tantalizing promise of more wisdom, the ability to know useful things that God knows. Her answer is yes.

It is a masterful sales pitch crafted to perfectly suit the qualities the tempter has observed in this woman. He concentrates on her desire for wisdom, and she proceeds to come up with the rest of the reasons for eating the fruit all by herself. And since the serpent has foreseen that the most tempt-able quality of the man lies in his response to the woman, he can merely sit back and enjoy his handiwork as she helpfully gives the man his share of the deadly fruit.

The evil one picked the way God picks, but he had two disadvantages: he could not read the heart, and he could not read the master plan. In God's loving confrontation and rebuke of His beloved fallen man and woman, He will unveil the missing piece of His master plan: redemption. He will reveal it in the form of a three-fold curse.

* * *

In the grand curse which God binds upon the three beings facing Him in the garden, He pulls off a transcendent switch. He carves out a place for the humans in the timeless spiritual world and fastens the immortal, evil angel to the temporal physical world to serve out his time of influence. The magnificence of the plan is unveiled to the serpent first, as his awful doom dawns on him: not only has he lost his bid for equality with the Most High, he is now reduced to the lowest state a spiritual being can imagine. He is stuck in the material realm for the duration – that will be his sphere of influence. He will crawl on his belly, lower than any physical beast, rolling in the dust of the creation of his bitter enemy man, wallowing in his hatred and jealousy and constant dreams of revenge. Oh, yes, there will be enmity between his seed and the woman's seed, and he will bruise and crush (the Hebrew word is the same) as many of their heels as he can sink his teeth into. But the horrible curse has been pronounced. His own head will be crushed by One of theirs. This mighty immortal being is now bound to the wheel of earthly time along with his mortal enemies, his only weapons deception and human mortality, his only work to briefly build a kingdom that will be plundered and brought to nothing, a futile and detestable effort that will be wiped away like a stain. And then the fires.

What has traditionally been seen as a “curse” on the man and woman is never identified by God as a

curse. Consequences, yes. Apparently unpleasant, quite. But look closely at the consequences for the woman. God has already told the serpent that he will place enmity between him and the woman herself, as well as between her seed and his seed. Possibly the part about seed doesn't mean a great deal to her yet, no humans having produced any so far in the garden. But she probably didn't need to be told about snake-enmity for her own part. Indeed, the word she uses in her own confession to God, "He 'nasha' me and I ate," usually translated as "deceived," has the connotation in Hebrew of forcing a debt or sale on someone (in the context of what transpired between the woman and the serpent, perhaps, "He sold me a bill of goods!"). How will this dedicated ill-will between the serpent and the woman play out through the ages?

Next God tells the woman that He "will greatly multiply your sorrow ['itstsabon'] and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children...[NKJV]" Once again, somewhat foreign concepts to the woman at this point, but not to us. We know that there is nothing very sorrowful, in most cases, about conceiving babies, even though bringing forth children can be decidedly uncomfortable, as labor-prep coaches like to say. Throughout the Old Testament, conception is regarded as a cause of great rejoicing and sometimes even a goal of competitive or desperate behavior (recall the stories of Sarah, Lot's daughters, Rachel and Leah, Hannah, Tamar). The two other uses of the word "itstsabon" are clearly intended to mean "toil" or "sorrowful labor" rather than physical pain. The first is used to apply to the drudgery of the man's struggle to produce food from soil that only seems to provide thorns and thistles: "Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil shall you eat of it All the days of your life" (Genesis 3:17). The second is Lamech's hopeful declaration about the future blessings to be expected from his son Noah: "Now he called his name Noah, saying, 'This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the LORD has cursed.'" What is it about the woman's child-producing role that will be the cause of so much difficulty and, somehow, sadness like the sadness of Adam and Lamech thinking of the ground, cursed for all our sakes?.

The third part of the woman's sentence is for her to be remanded over to the man's custody: "...your desire will be for you husband, And he will rule over you" (Genesis 3:16). This is an apparently clearer case of the punishment fitting the crime, since it was the woman's overweening desire for wisdom that made her so receptive to the serpent's pitch. Yet there are inconsistencies here, too. Surely the desire was already present in some degree, or the woman would not have immediately given the fruit to her husband, an act of intended blessing. We would also expect the direction about the man's rule to be addressed to the man as well as, or instead of the woman, since it was he who had the commandment ("Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it;' Cursed is the ground because of you" (Genesis 3:17). Further, he has been with her during the temptation (the Hebrew form of address used by the serpent is plural, and the woman gives fruit "to her husband with her ('immah,' which has the sense of being close by). So is the woman to be involved only with her human husband, fallen like herself, as an object of passionate fixation and source of guidance throughout the ages? Or is this sentence handed down only on this woman and this man, while the rest of us will inherit from them the ugly knowledge of evil, the bitter taste of mortality and the curse of the very ground that we inhabit? Or is there something grander in the works?

Of the three characters in this story, only one is a powerful, super-intelligent, otherworldly being whose nature and domain we know little of. The other two were just like us, an ordinary man and woman, placed on a physical earth with daily lives to live and jobs to do, the prospect of a family to raise and a shared life in their garden, and (alas) rules to live by. Yet those two, more than any other characters in the Bible, other than the persons of the Godhead, are familiar to humankind. Christians have always had mixed feelings about them, revering them on one hand as the pinnacle of God's creation and our own ancestors, on the other, wishing they hadn't done what they did (and knowing in our hearts that we would have done the same). Because of the story, we can embrace their humanity and apply it to

ourselves. Yet God has more in mind with this simple story. The questions broached above are like the questions raised by “fulfilled” prophecies in the Bible that are mostly explainable, but not entirely.

Students of the scriptures know that the Author works in layers, levels and patterns, and that there are some great themes in the Bible that are re-worked on practically every page:

Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. Luke 24:27

Having brought up types and prophecies of Christ, we can point out the much-pointed-out fact that Adam is a type of Christ:

Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. Romans 5:14

And there are many questions, and many discussions to be had about how Adam is a type of Christ, but the subject of our discussion is the woman and the serpent, so we return to the character of Eve. First, notice that she is not called by her name, Chavah, until most of the story is over – she is simply “the woman.” When she does get a name, it projects her onto the screen of all of human history to come – “mother of all living.” In reading her name, we are reminded that the very DNA of her aversion to the tempter and his seed runs in our blood. As Christians, the lifelong struggle against the forces of evil without and within ourselves was her battle first. And all mothers, perhaps more so Christian mothers in our own time, can feel some of the keenness of the anxiety and toil of bearing and raising a child to follow Christ in a hostile and depraved culture. Eve lived to see her first baby, the very first baby ever to bring a woman joy, go down in the flames of sin's desire (Genesis 4:7). Did she think then of the words of the curse as she contemplated the generations of her children's children's children on down through the ages of “all living?” She must have lived with a sense of loss and remorse over her own deed that we could never bear. Yet for each of her children's births at which her words are mentioned in the Bible, she acknowledges God's help and gift (Genesis 4:1, 4:25). He is the One she turns to first. Your desire will be for your husband. Were we looking at a deeper layer of the Genesis curse, something that reveals what shape “the woman” will take even as the “first Adam” moves through the pages of the Bible to fill in the prophetic image of Christ?

Even when God creates them male and female, He has set the grand momentous course of His universe in motion. He has put the elements in their places, and He will weave story after story around them, until we finally catch on. The woman will morph into the wife, then the faithless wives, then the restored wife and the divorced wife, and finally into the radiant bride. The serpent will stay a serpent, because he is only there to make the story come out right.

Next: The Woman in the Desert

Anne Lively

A Few Housekeeping Items

I am pretty-much a one-man show and run two highly active ministry organizations. Because I maximize my time to achieve the greatest impact possible for the Kingdom of God, I value straight-to-the-point resources and communications. If you desire to communicate with me on any matter including this newsletter please be as concise as possible and please use email, not the telephone, even if you have my phone number (except in emergencies).

You may reach me at scottlivelyministries@gmail.com

Donations

I have always followed a policy of providing my writings and other self-created resources without charge whenever possible. However, my support, and that of both of the ministry organizations I run, rely upon donations to operate. For all matters related to my prophecy studies and writings donations should be sent to Redemption Gate Mission Society, PO Box 2373, Springfield, MA 01101 or online [here](#). If you want your donation to be designated for any specific purpose, just send me a note or an email to say so, otherwise it will be used where most needed.

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