

## **Reflexion - The Mystery of Iniquity**

*"Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." (Ezekiel 28:17, KJV) "Thou hast said in thine heart... I will be like the Most High." (Isaiah 14:13-14, KJV)*

"Pride goes before destruction." (Proverbs 16:18) And Lucifer's pride caused his downfall. The highest position in heaven went to his head. He succumbed to the power of seduction by admiring and concentrating more on his position of high honor than in His Creator. Thinking lofty and mighty of himself, he began to free-fall downward. "Iniquity was found in thee."

Iniquity had also begun to brew in the Israelites. Since God had called Abraham and blessed them because of him, they began to think they were better than other nations, and that salvation was only for them. They were so oblivious to the fact that God could turn stones into descendants of Abraham, (Matthew 3:9; Luke 3:8) that when God's Holy Spirit was poured out upon Gentiles, they were astonished. But because the light of God's grace for all mankind began to shine in their understanding, they glorified God saying, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts 11:18, KJV) They too had been victims of having a special position go to their head. Obviously, they had not known God intimately. But the Holy Spirit convicted them otherwise and they praised and thanked God, consequently embracing the Gentile believers.

Considering the crime statistics that show 91.25% of criminals are male, why do you suppose it is that so many men feel that they are the spiritual guides of women, that women need be under a man's control and supervision, that women's influence and potential achievements need to be limited or monitored, that women need to be on a short leash, that women's wings need to be kept clipped to keep them from flying and soaring high, that women's growth in all intellectual and spiritual arenas needs to be curtailed and if they shine at all in any field of learning and influence, they are to do so only as a bonsai who is under male supervision?

They have been seduced by their physical strength and stature, and apparently being created first and called into the priesthood has gone to their head. Consequently, and sadly, many view achievements by women as a threat to their self-perceived superiority, and believe it is their God-given duty to defend themselves against the premise that men and women were created spiritually equal. God had foretold that this would happen:

*"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." (Genesis 3:16, KJV)*

"He shall rule over thee" was not an order for men to rule over women, or as many of them do, to bully women. God's declaration was the warning of a curse. Now all of us want curses removed, and other humans want to help in removing them. For example, in the medical field, all endeavor is made to ease a woman's suffering during child labor. That seems fine and appropriate to everyone, although child labor was pronounced as a curse. However, removing

## *From the Desk of Teresita Pérez*

August 2013

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the curse of man ruling over women? Now wait a minute. If that happens then men won't be able to impose their ruling over women and back it up with Scripture. Oh, the mystery of iniquity.

Solomon, the wise man, stated: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die... A time to kill... A time to weep... a time to mourn... to cast away... to lose... to rend... to hate... time of war." (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, KJV) Is death, killing, weeping, mourning, losing, hating and war what God wants? Of course not. Solomon was a philosopher. He was not expressing how God wants things to be. Instead, upon observing human nature and the events of life, he declared how things are in this world of sin. Likewise, the curse pronounced upon Eve does not mean that that is the way God wants things to be, but rather that that is what He foresaw would happen because of sin. And it happens when a man has a sense of entitlement over a woman's soul. Thus the curse expresses not God's will, but rather how things would be like due to sin.

"He shall rule over thee," in the context of the curse, denotes two things. First, that before the curse man did not rule over woman. The only Ruler of both is God. And second, that the ruling of man would be abusive, if not tyrannical. The latter has inspired Christian movies like Courageous, in which husbands and fathers plan a special ceremony where they make statements known as The Resolution, which are bold declarations of commitments to be faithful to God as the spiritual leader of their home. Many Christian men across the board are making such noble commitments. But two things not highlighted in the movie jump right out of the screen. First, the women did not need to make a commitment. They had been faithful all along. And second, though the "abusive aspect of the curse" was nobly intended to be removed by The Resolution of men, the curse would continue in a milder, more palatable form in that women would still not be perceived as a spiritual leader and not on equal spiritual level as men. Sad, because many times it is the wife who is the sole faithful and unfaltering spiritual presence in the home. Sad, because it may be that her husband's ultimate commitment to Christ was the result of the Holy Spirit working in his heart in answer to her intense and incessant intercessory prayers on his behalf by her having been the faithful priest for God in the home all along.

"Sin originates in a person when little by little they come to indulge the desire of self-exaltation. Though all that they are comes from God, they come to regard it as pertaining to themselves and aspire to power that is the prerogative of Christ alone." This quote is a warning for all of us, men and women alike. It is a paraphrase and here's the actual quote:

*"Sin originated with him who, next to Christ, had been most honored of God and was highest in power and glory among the inhabitants of heaven.... Little by little Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation.... Though all his glory was from God, this mighty angel came to regard it as pertaining to himself.... [T]his*

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*prince of angels aspired to power that was the prerogative of Christ alone.*" (Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 6-7)

Unlike some men like to believe, they are not the intermediary between a woman and God, Christ is. And men are not preferred of God over women or vice versa. That kind of thinking is what originated Lucifer's fall. That kind of thinking *IS* the mystery of iniquity. It causes us to underestimate the work in ministry which God has called women to do; and much worse, it foments and brews the mystery of iniquity in our men. We need to fight this falsity tooth and nail for our beloved men are falling pray to Lucifer's own error. Dangerous.

Both men and women are equal instruments of God to use, and the mind is of Christ. He decides to call, use and empower either a man or a woman. It's His call. It's His prerogative. In the proclamation of the Gospel, males and females are to be one. Thus we need to stop entertaining the belief that "he shall rule over thee" is an order and not a curse. We need to stop caressing in our midst the mystery of iniquity. And we need to start believing wholeheartedly that the only intermediary between a woman and God is Jesus Christ, and if He calls a woman to preach the Gospel in the forefront, so be it. God knows what He's doing.