

TROUBLE IN PARADISE

TROUBLE IN PARADISE: THE ORIGIN OF MOTHER'S DAY

The origins of Mother's Day as celebrated in the United States date back to the 19th century. In the years before the Civil War, Ann Reeves Jarvis of West Virginia helped start "Mothers' Day Work Clubs" to teach local women how to properly care for their children. Or Another precursor to Mother's Day came from the abolitionist and suffragette Julia Ward Howe. In 1870 Howe wrote the "Mother's Day Proclamation," a call to action that asked mothers to unite in promoting world peace.

When I say the Mother's Day origin story, I'm NOT talking about:

But we're going further back! All the way back to the creation of the first woman!

And we're picking up right where we left off last week when we were talking about heavenizing our world. I'm going to wager that if you led all your friends at work or school to Jesus but your home life is in hell, you would be incredibly unhappy. You'll be saying, "God, what good is all my service in Church when my wife and I are constantly at each other? Or your teenage kids are depressed or rebellious. So it's time once again as we do every year to focus on the home front and contend for shalom in the home.

Shalomy my homey!

If it's not happening at home, don't export it!" - PEarl Morihara

In Genesis the first sign of Trouble in Paradise was in the family—specifically between husband and wife. The first murder was between their sons, Cain and Abel. So the devil loves to go after families. Family is the devil's first and favorite target. He knows if he can destroy the family, all of society will follow. On the other hand, if we can heavenize the home, the rest of society will follow.

A couple of weeks ago I had a crazy revelation in a class with Tim Mackie from Bible Project. Get the app and do this class!

We begin our "Trouble in Paradise" series with a deep dive into how and why God created family in the first place, specifically man and wife. If we understand God's creative design, then dad and mom will see themselves very differently. If we stray away from God's will, there will be trouble in paradise, but if we do it God's way, we will see Heaven in the Home!

So here's the origin of motherhood:

"Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him'" (Genesis 2:18 TLW).

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Helper: עֶזֶר Ezer

“Our soul waits for the Lord;
He is our help (Ezer) and our shield” (Psalm 33:20).

O Israel, trust in the Lord;
He is their help and their shield” (Psalm 115:9).

“How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, Whose hope is in the Lord his God” (Psalm 146:5).

In every subsequent use of עֶזֶר in the Scriptures, it is God who is ultimately identified as the helper/deliverer not a person. So Eve can be seen as a Divine Deliverer to partner with and empower Adam to do what he cannot do by himself—which is to multiply humanity.

Now if you just take a look at Adam’s equipment, can he multiply the human race by himself? We would all agree it’s impossible for Adam to fulfill God’s will without help. So God does something pretty crazy!

“So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place” (Genesis 2:21)

Pretty familiar passage except that’s not what it says in Hebrew

Ribs: צֵלַע (Sela)

The word for rib in Hebrew is אֵלַע (ala) not sela.

Sela is used to mean the side of something—like the side of a mountain or the tabernacle. A long time ago a Bible scholar translator used rib and it stuck. Translators have been saying rib ever since. But what if we went with the original word for a second? So good took not Adam’s rib but a whole side of him!

God “split the Adam!”

And from the one human, God made a separate and complementary human—from ISH, God created ISHAH. From MAN God created WOMAN. God wanted Adam to populate the Earth but he couldn’t accomplish this alone. Adam needed a partner that was like him—bone of his bones, flesh of his flesh—but built and designed with different equipment so the two of them could work together to fulfill God’s plan for them and the world. See where this is going? It doesn’t just apply to procreation but anything God has asked us to do!

Remember, Jesus and Paul were single and had no problem fulfilling the call of God on their lives. But if you are married, press in on this revelation!

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When I asked the Father how do I grow in my relationship with You? He said, "Be a son."

When I asked Holy Spirit, "How do I grow in my relationship with You?" He said, "Learn to love your wife."

I'm not saying your wife is the Holy Spirit, unless you're married to my wife. Mona is the Holy Spirit! 🤖

But there are parallels between relating to the Holy Spirit and loving your wife.

During my recovery, Mona has been an amazing ezer helper, doing what I could not do on my own. She nursed me back from stroke. To get ready for home dialysis, she and Mark and Rachael had to completely rearrange our downstairs bedroom room and turn it into a sterile hospital room. They cleaned out the closet and moved this huge bookshelf and upstairs.

The Bible says,

"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 4:30).

"Do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thess. 5:19).

"You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered" (1 Peter 3:7).

Your relationship with your wife and your relationship with Holy Spirit are linked!

You want to see your wife happy and flourishing.

I hope that by seeing the origin of Motherhood, we see how to relate to and care for mom. And it's parallel to how we relate with the Holy Spirit which is exactly where we are as a Church right now. To heavenize our homes, we must learn to honor mom as our helper sent from God to equip and empower us to do what we would be impossible to do on our own. For Jesus is calling us to multiply the Earth again, and we are to do this as one with our Ezer.

Closing Benediction

Let's all go to prayer. And let's thank God for our moms. If like me, your mom is now in glory, take a moment to thank God for how her presence in your life was like a Holy Spirit, empowering and equipping you to do God's will in your life.

If you're sitting here with your mom or your wife, turn toward her now, take her by the hands, and let her know how you see her today. Share your heart. This may be awkward or uncomfortable, but see if you can breakthrough in order to affirm the truth about your mom's or wife's life.

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Questions for Meditation and Discussion

1. What did Holy Spirit reveal to you about the origin of motherhood?
2. How does this affect how you see and/or appreciate your mom or wife?
3. How will this transform and heavenize your family life? (Be specific.)
4. Turn to your mom or wife and share your heart and affirm the true purpose for her role in your family or marriage.