

SELF *glory*, the poisonous fruit

“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... EVERYTHING THEY DO IS DONE FOR PEOPLE TO SEE:** They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called ‘Rabbi’ by others” (Matthew 23:2-3, 5).

“For they [the Pharisees] loved **human praise more than the praise of God**”
(John 12:43).

Self-glory is a poisonous fruit tempting all of God’s creation both in heaven and on earth. The desire to be above others: more important, more intelligent, more beauty, more wealth, more power, more... everything and anything is an addictive sweetener. When the Israelites said to God, “**We want to be like the nations all around us, who serve idols of wood and stone**” (Ezekiel 20:32), they were desiring to live like the nations around them whose **gods encouraged human-praise opposed to praising the Creator, God.** These gods ruling over the nations were themselves, **self-glorifying rulers** that is why idols of wood and stone were made by the people.

Assyria: “**Assyria, once a cedar in Lebanon...** the cedars in the garden of God could not rival it... ‘I made it beautiful with abundant branches, the envy of all the trees of Eden in the garden of God,’ says the Creator... **Because it towered on high,** lifting its top above the thick foliage, and because **IT WAS PROUD OF ITS HEIGHT,** I handed it over to the ruler of the nations, for him to deal with **according to the wickedness. I cast it aside**” (Ezekiel 31:3-15).

God uses His coded language of imagery to describe this heavenly ruler over Assyria who was once a great leader [cedar] in God’s headquarters [Lebanon]. Imagery of cedars bring an immediate rich visual of the most spectacular trees on earth. Cedars are known for their exceptional qualities: durability, dimensionally stable, a thermal insulator, bacterial and fungal resistant, oils that act as natural preservatives, and a fresh aroma that deters pests.

The heavenly ruler over Assyria became proud of his height and slipped into the coma of self-glory. He was not alone. The ruler of Egypt fell sick, too.

Pharaoh: “This is what the Sovereign LORD says: ‘I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, you great monster lying among your streams. **You say, ‘The Nile belongs to me; I MADE IT for myself’**” (Ezekiel 29:3).

This heavenly ruler claimed to be a creator—the creator of the Nile. God, the Almighty and ONLY Creator judged this self-glorifying ruler. “Which of the trees [leaders] of Eden [God’s

government] can be compared with you in splendor and majesty? Yet you, too, will be brought down with the trees [leaders] of Eden to the earth below; you will lie among the uncircumcised [wicked], with those killed by the sword. 'This is Pharaoh and all his hordes,' declares the Sovereign LORD" (Ezekiel 31:18).

There are rulers and beings with great power and authority in the heavens. The sky that prevents mankind from seeing into the heavens has not yet been rolled back. These rogue heavenly beings deceive mankind; they are our true enemies (Ephesians 6:12). Their oldest and most powerful leader of these rogue heavenly beings is like a roaring lion prowling in the dark, seeking to destroy mankind and prevent God's newest creation from coming to the knowledge of their true calling as eternal, ruling sons of God in His kingdom (I Peter 5:8).

Lucifer: God Almighty has prophesied the fate of the leader of wickedness. "How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! **You said in your heart:**

- I will ascend to heaven;
- I will raise my throne above the stars of God;
- I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain.
- I will ascend above the tops of the clouds,
- I will make myself like the Most High.'

But **you are brought down to the grave to the depths of the pit"** (Isaiah 14:12-15).

The temptation to be worshiped comes from a proud spirit and a self-glorying desire as Satan knows well. He just won't give up. He tempted Jesus, "All this I will give you, if you will **bow down and worship me"** (Matthew 4:9).

Jesus replied, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: '**Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only**'" (Matthew 4:10).

Jesus Christ is a humble servant of God, and Son. He set for us an example. "Who, **being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, HE MADE HIMSELF NOTHING BY TAKING THE VERY NATURE OF A SERVANT, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!"** (Philippians 2:6-8)

The example Jesus set for all of mankind is that God, the Father is supreme. All achievements of the created can be attributed as gifts from this Creator. So, put aside boastings and desires of grandeur. Search for the things that please God: humility, teachability, servitude to God and others, love one another, love God.

Pious leaders seek recognition and take pride in human achievements, taking the gifts from God as self-acquired talents.

Jesus said, “Your approval means nothing to me” (John 5:41).

Pious leaders gather around each other, praising each other.

“How can you believe if **you accept glory from one another**, yet do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?” (John 5:44)

Pious leaders do not speak the words of God; they put their own spin on scriptures to promote their own ideas. They are not open to reason or understanding nor are they teachable.

“He who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory, but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is a man of truth; in Him there is no falsehood” (John 7:18).

Pious leaders talk often of their achievements to lather themselves with the glory from men.

“Therefore, when thou doest *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that **they may have glory of men**. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward” (Matthew 6:2).

There is only One whose praise is of any worth. Jesus, our only teacher said, "If I want glory for myself, it doesn't count. But **it is my Father who will glorify me**" (John 8:54).

So, those who follow Jesus live as he lived, seeking praise and glory from God alone.

“If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will *my* Father honour” (John 12:26).

The Pharisees, Sadducees and Jewish elders all sought praise and self-glory elevating themselves to the position of ‘Rabbi.’ But Jesus said, “you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for **you have only one Master** and all of you are equal as brothers and sisters” (Matthew 23:8 NLT). The body of Christ has no interior layers placing its members one over the other. Rather, the greatest of these leaders within the body is the servant of all (Matthew 23:11). Being titled an apostle, prophet or prophetess, pastor or teacher is not a license for glory; it is an office of humble servitude to fearfully obey God and set a righteous example for all of mankind.

When the time comes for the resurrection of Christ’s humble bride, she will be positioned by God accordingly. “For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted” (Matthew 23:12). Together finally, Christ—the head and his wife—the body, will be unified as one whole creation who gives glory to their Creator, God.

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