



Prepare Messiah's Bride: I Am a Wall in Need of Rebuilding

Genesis 1:27-28, 2:18; Song of Solomon 4:12; 8:10; Jeremiah 15:19-21; 31:22; Isaiah 54:11-13; Revelation 21:2, 9-10

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Introduction

It appears that there is a series of studies coming forth as I consider various aspects of preparing Messiah's Bride. While examining the meaning and implications of Proverbs 20:30, about blows that hurt cleansing evil from the heart, I came to the connection with this same picture applied to the **searching** Bride in the third chapter of Song of Solomon. There was also a bold declaration in chapter eight by the **restored** Bride that "I am a wall" which led me to examine that metaphor. Since I have also been studying Nehemiah's return to build the wall of Jerusalem and the set apart city and wall is described in Isaiah and Revelation as being a Bride, this concept appeared related. What I found has opened my eyes to a picture that is related to the "Two Shall Become One" study I began four years ago. Yet it is only one of four areas of related study that the Proverbs 20:30 work opened up. Even just this portion of it is complex but I experience it as a profound connection between women/mankind, the Bride, walls and our preparation to meet Messiah face to face.

What is a wall? Definition, function, word pictures, Scripture references

According to the Blue Letter Bible (BLB) online, there are thirteen Hebrew words used that are translated as "wall" or some kind of hedge, rampart or sheep hold. Three Greek words refer to a "wall." Exodus 14:22 is the first use of this word "wall" from *chowmah* in the description of how the waters stood up as a wall on either side of the children of Israel as they crossed the Red Sea.

The particular use of "wall" in these verses in Exodus, the Song of Solomon, Jeremiah and Nehemiah are all the same, Strong's # 2346 חוֹמָה (*chowmah*). Vine's Expository Dictionary confirmed that the Septuagint connected this *chowmah* with *teichos* in the Greek which is used in a number of Revelation verses describing the wall around Jerusalem, even describing it as "adorned as a Bride" which we saw first in Isaiah.

Rev 21:18 And the building of **the wall** of it was of jasper:
and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

Rev 21:19 And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished
with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire;
the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

Rev 21:20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl;
the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

Rev 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl:
and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

Gesenius's Lexicon confirms it is *generally used of a wall around a town; and metaphorically used of a maiden, chaste and difficult of approach*. Also noted was the connection with Jeremiah and the brazen wall of defensive strength metaphor.

*Jer 15:19 Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again,
and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile,
thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.*

*Jer 15:20 And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen **wall**:
and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee:
for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD.*

The BLB notes it as: *Act. participle of an unused root apparently meaning to join.*¹ It further connects its etymology as being from Strong's #2266, "*chabar*."²

TWOT, 598, for *chabar*, a root word for *chowmah* has quite an extensive commentary on the various closely related words and aspects of coupling and joining. It may refer to the joining of the priestly *ephod* at the shoulders, to the joining of the curtains to form the walls of the Tabernacle, to joints and walls in general, and to alliances, including political or personal as in marriage, and joining of men in other ways. Not all of these ways of joining are positive.

Logically then we can see a picture of this kind of "wall" being a protective thing that joins as it encloses a city. It is both designed and constructed with that purpose in mind. What is to be protected is within and dangers are without, though certainly we know that danger may surface even within a protected area. The walls of water protected and enclosed the "hallway" for Israel to walk through the Red sea. In view of the note regarding *chabar* as it relates to the *ephod*, I was drawn also to consider the metaphor of the Levites themselves. The Levites, were the immediate presence around the Ark in the Tabernacle. The name, Levi, means "attached" and comes from a root word which can be understood as "being joined." So we may see a picture here of a wall of protection joined around the Presence of Yah, by those in most intimate proximity, and encircled yet again by all Israel, a secondary wall. (A double wall was often built around a city.)

¹ Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for *chowmah* (Strong's 2346)". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2014. 30 Jan 2014. <<http://www.blbclassic.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?strongs=H2346>>

² Blue Letter Bible. "Dictionary and Word Search for *chabar* (Strong's 2266)". Blue Letter Bible. 1996-2014. 30 Jan 2014. <<http://www.blbclassic.org/lang/lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?Strong=H2266&t=KJV>>

What is a Bride/spouse? Definitions, origin, commands, function

Here we return to Genesis for the initial circumstances that led to the “taking out” of woman:

*Gen 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:
and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air,
and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing
that creepeth upon the earth.*

*Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him;
male and female created he them.*

*Gen 1:28 And **God blessed them**, and **God said unto them**, Be fruitful, and multiply,
and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea,
and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

*Gen 2:18 And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone;
I will make him an **help meet** for him.*

*Gen 2:21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept:
and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;*

*Gen 2:22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman,
and brought her unto the man.*

*Gen 2:23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh:
she shall be called Woman, because **she was taken out of Man.***

*Gen 2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother,
and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be **one flesh.***

Though it isn't the common interpretation, I am not alone in seeing that man, as initially created was referred to in the plural form and then woman was “**taken out**” of man. Since she was “taken out” of man might we see either a complimentary picture or perhaps that she came from within or where she was either “joined” or “surrounded” by the aspect that then was called man, or mankind, and then Adam? The language of blessing and commands were to **them**, male and female as He created mankind, though the commands were issued before she was separated out or if I may say, “set apart for His purposes.” The first thing they were told upon separation is that the two were to become one again! Our Elohim wastes no time setting forth His expectations! I see this as a personal directive but also a corporate one, both in any current time frame and in a future “fullness of time.”

There has been much confusion and oppressive teaching that has resulted from what I view as misinterpretation, interpreting woman's role as somehow inferior to man's role with varied justifications for this. Examination of all the variables has been undertaken elsewhere and will not be examined in depth here. The interested reader is referred to the “*And the Two Shall Become One*” study in progress and to the glossary on the Set Apart Ministries site. (You may also be interested in the extensive 4 DVD teaching, [Women in Ministry: Silenced or Set Free?](#) by Cheryl Schatz. Though I don't agree with all of her premises or conclusions, it is the most extensive, thorough and thought provoking study of Scripture on the matter I have found.) Briefly, the term “help meet” is a common translation for the Hebrew “*ezer knegdo*” which I understand to refer to woman as first a “deliverer” using the same term that our Abba uses of Himself, and then as one who speaks both for what is good and against what is bad to the husband/man. I believe the implications of this are prophetic and very large in scope, which will become more apparent as this article proceeds though I do **not** agree with one Bible teacher online who takes it to the point that an “*ezer*” meaning deliverer, places women as a superior head over men. This seems like going from one ditch to the other, while avoiding the straight path!

Micro and macro pictures/ physical picture of spiritual truth

Anyone who has studied the Word for any length of time and particularly those who have attended to the original language context and thematic study will be familiar with the pattern that our Abba knows the end from the beginning.

Isa 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

He has been, in fact, telling the same story of creation, fall, redemption, restoration in many different ways throughout the entire Word. He is gracious and knows that the full reality of all that He is and intends is beyond our finite comprehension. Therefore, He has also provided embedded metaphors and word pictures in our physical reality that are mirrors or a micro version of the macro picture of the spiritual realities and truths He intends for us.

Though we remain cautious with studies at these levels, we have found great joy and revelation in examining not only the straightforward, literal or *Pshat*, level of meaning, but also carefully moving through the levels of *Remez*, *Drash* and *Sod*. We look for continuity in context and adhere to the understanding that any other level of meaning cannot be correct if it in any way nullifies or contradicts the straightforward meaning. We consider the pictographic meanings of words as a final consideration, only after more conservative or linguistic meanings are examined. These pictures most often seem to amplify or confirm what is already understood from more conventional means. Though they would not be a primary source of interpretation, we have included them in our overall studies. The intent of any interpretation which is a fulfillment of Torah and not abolishing it, we understand to mean an interpretation that is consistent with His revealed character. He is not a man that He would lie. He is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent. He is all the characteristics He sets forth in Exodus 34, twelve parts mercy and one part justice. He is intensely relational within the fullness of His *echad* or *yachad* and toward us. Messiah Yeshua is the fullness of *Elohim* in a physical presence here for a season and returning for His Bride. Nor do we see that a God who intends personal relationship and good for His creation, would create something for a purpose and then not provide for or deny the purposeful fulfillment of His design.

Establish Comparisons of People, and a Bride/Spouse to a City or Wall

In addition to the previous connotations of the relationship between people and walls, there are a few more to add. In ancient times a city without a wall was at the mercy of anyone, being unable to enclose or encircle that which was good within and keep out that which was unwanted. The city, the people, are then said to be afflicted and bearing reproach in direct relationship to the existence of a wall, which is supposed to act as a protection, as this word is also *chowmah*.

*Neh 1:3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in **great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.***

In 1 Kings 20, the story of Ahab, King of Israel contending with Ben hadad, King of Syria includes an episode in which the prophet spoke to confirm that YHWH would fight for Israel basically because of the arrogance of Ben

hadad and so that He would be made known...and He did so by causing a wall, *chowmah*, to fall down on the enemy; surely another protective picture. And there is Joshua leading the Levites and all Israel whose shofar blasts and shouts brought down the wall, *chowmah* of Jericho, another certain picture of a wall cooperating for the benefit of Yah's people.

*Proverbs 25:28 He that hath no rule over his own spirit
is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.*

This reference, too, is *chowmah*, giving a very descriptive picture of the metaphor of one without discipline being like a city without protection, without walls.

This reference reminds me of the story of David, Nabal and Abigail which is another association with people as walls. David and his men had protected Nabal's flocks and lands and were said to be "like a wall" —again *chowmah*— around them. Nabal's character is said to be "churlish" and "evil" in the KJV and describes him as feasting in drunkenness while he refused David's request for provisions. And perhaps it is easy to see the connotation that Nabal in his lack of good character had no rule over his own spirit and so became like a city broken down with the wall protecting him being withdrawn. There is more to this picture which will follow in later comments.

And Jeremiah weighed in with the declaration that one who returns and honors YHWH will be made as a strong protective wall, also using *chowmah*.

*Jer 15:19 Therefore thus saith Jehovah, If thou return, then will I bring thee again,
that thou mayest stand before me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile,
thou shalt be as my mouth: they shall return unto thee, but thou shalt not return unto them.*

*Jer 15:20 And I will make thee unto this people a fortified brazen wall;
and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee;
for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee,
saith Jehovah.*

I was quite surprised at the number of references to walls and some kind of protection or protective action that involve women: Rahab protecting the spies through her house on the wall (Joshua 2:15), the wise woman of *Abel of Bethmaachah* (2 Samuel 20:21), the woman who cried to the king over the wall over the murder of her infant son (2 Kings 6:26) and even the daughters who participated in the rebuilding of the wall (Nehemiah 3:12). There are also the *implied* pictures of a woman as a wall or walled city such as mentioned earlier in Isaiah's picture of the Bride as the city of Jerusalem with her jeweled walls, echoed in Revelation. It is also found again in the Song of Solomon as the Beloved more or less tells the Bride she is a garden enclosed/walled which she later affirms.

*Son 4:12 A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse;
a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.*

*Son 8:10 I am a wall, and my breasts like towers:
then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.*

Here the study took an unexpected turn as I considered the meaning of the bride being “a garden inclosed.” Strong’s H1588: “*Gan*” was no surprise as “garden” as in “*Gan Eden*,” the Garden of Eden, a particular enclosed place within the region of Eden. “Inclosed,” לַעֲנֵי Strong’s H5274: “*na’al*” brought a possible revelation. The first listed meaning was “to bar, lock, bolt” but the second is “**to furnish with shoes or sandals**”

As Gesenius’s Lexicon indicated *chowmah* is used of a wall around a city, but also figuratively for “a chaste maiden, difficult of approach.” So this maiden, the sister or spouse, who is compared to a wall that joins or encircles and is barred or locked can also be said to have had shoes or sandals provided. Several comparisons rushed to my mind; first among them that the Bride/Shulamite of Song of Solomon did not want to defile her feet. If she is a “wall barred or locked” this leads to one kind of metaphor but having been shod leads to another: she is one who has been provided shoes by her Beloved. This comparison goes further to consider connection with Messiah’s washing of **just** the feet of the disciples that will be addressed at a later time. Briefly, they will be part of the Bride, and perhaps He only needed to wash their feet as they became defiled walking in the dust of the world because He had provided them with sandals. As recorded in Isaiah 52:2, Jerusalem, the daughters of Zion were to shake themselves from the dust and arise. Matthew, Mark and Luke all record His instruction to the disciples that as they brought the Good news and were not well-received, they were to shake off the dust of or from under their feet or their sandals. And it is a picture of judgment in horrifying comparison with what is in store for Sodom and Gomorrah at the time of the end, which is also the time of the Season of our Joy, the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. We can rest in being shod by our Bridegroom: Part of the full armor of *Yah*...the gospel of Peace... the priestly garments, the garb of the Bride:

Eph 6:15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Quickly returning to the wall metaphor, let’s move on to examine the context of Nehemiah’s experiences with walls before we draw it all together.

Establish comparison of Nehemiah’s rebuilding the wall/physical picture of spiritual truth/prophetic of later days

In the course of preparing this material, I came across a [study done on Nehemiah](#) that also draws similar parallels that I see as part of the foundation for what I have understood recently. The author has done a fine work of drawing thematic connections from the literal meaning to the prophetic, though he might not use that language. The general picture provided is enlightening and encouraging, if you stand with Nehemiah!

To follow the story, we must keep it in context for all these things happened to them as an ensample for us upon whom the ends of the age will fall.

- The massive exodus in which our Abba delivered His people Israel from slavery and trained them up to occupy the promised Land.
- The victories followed by the defeats.
- The great falling away that led to the exile of first Israel and then Judah. One and two.
- The eventual return, Judah first, again, one and two steps.

All prophetic of the second greater exodus, meeting face to face with Him in the wilderness as one again, He moves to prepare His Bride for the REAL Season of our Joy, no longer just rehearsals! And prophetic of the stages of return that must happen now again, since the restoration took place in two steps then, we might well expect it to be accomplished in two steps yet again.

The story of Ezra is the story of the return of the exiles from Babylon, only to confront the falling away and intermarriages that had again shown their stiff necks and refusal to yield to YHW's ways. There was an extensive process to cause them to set aside what was unholy and again to become set apart for His purposes, sending away wives and children who were not of Israel. My understanding, and it is only through applying thematic principles and an awareness of our Elohim's character, is that the discernment process involved was lengthy because "foreigners" were not automatically rejected but screened to learn if they had come to honor the God of Israel and put away their own pagan gods, or not. It is a Pesach picture, with Ezra providing the wise counsel they desperately needed to correctly build and separate themselves as part of His Kingdom. The first wave...the first Feast.

Now enter Nehemiah. I will provide a bit more detail here for this second wave of restoration since it pertains to the subject at hand. Still back in Babylon, in prestigious and honorable service to the King, Nehemiah became aware of the current state of the union back in Israel.

Neh 1:3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

Realization of this situation brought him to great grief. In repentance and humility, he appealed to the God of Israel for His restoration of covenant promises with His people, through Nehemiah's leadership. His appeal to the King confirmed his call from YHW that he was to address the situation. He came to the people of Jerusalem with confidence in both kinds of his delegated authority and quietly evaluated the situation over three days before appealing to the people. This led to their acceptance of an otherwise impossible appearing task: to remove their reproach by rebuilding the walls, *chowmah*, to set them apart and protect them from their enemies.

Neh 2:17 Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.

*Neh 2:18 Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; a also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. **So they strengthened their hands for this good work.***

*Neh 3:12 And next unto him repaired Shallum the son of Halohesh, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem, **he and his daughters.***

Of course, the opposition didn't care for this determination.

Neh 2:19 But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?

But the people strengthened themselves in God and there is an entire chapter listing all the people who each built up the wall near their part of the city.

*Neh 4:6 So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof:
for the people had a mind to work.*

*Neh 4:7 But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians,
and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up,
and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth,
Neh 4:8 And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and **to hinder it.***

Or has NKJV has it:

Neh 4:8 *and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and **create confusion.***

Neh 4:10 *Then Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is failing, and there is so much **rubbish**
that we are not able to build the wall."*

Through the hindrances, confusion and rubbish, Nehemiah remained resolute and bold, turning back every effort to distract from the work of restoring the wall and removing the reproach from the city.

*Neh 6:1 Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies,
heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set
up the doors upon the gates;)*

*Neh 6:2 That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in
the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.*

*Neh 6:3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, **I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why
should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?***

Neh 6:4 Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

Neh 6:5 Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand;

*Neh 6:8 Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest,
but thou feignest them out of thine own heart.*

*Neh 6:9 For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done.
Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.*

This man knew the strength of the covenant relationship with our God and he walked in it as we need to do today. Under his leadership, the wall was not only restored to surrounding the city but built to a full height with all the needed gates in place, the impossible job that couldn't be done was done. The reproach and affliction was removed from Jerusalem in preparation for rededication of the people to serve the God of Israel, just as we are in need of again today. The spring feast connection is with being set apart for His purpose, the fall feast connection is about being restored to walk in that set apart purpose. This picture of the Fall Feast of Tabernacles is the pattern for His second advent here on earth, also known as the Marriage Feast of the Lamb.

Nehemiah's Rebuilding and the (RE)building of His Kingdom today in relationship with Women's Role

The need for two or three witnesses to establish a matter is a Torah principle. We see it in multiple places throughout Scripture. I suggest that we are seeing it again in the setting apart of mankind, male and female, so that through all the years of reproach and affliction that was needed to individuate the Bride, male and female, the blows that hurt cleanse evil from the heart, would ultimately bring the restoration that YHWH immediately spoke to them. Another in the series of two witnesses, male and female, finally fully in cooperation with His plan.

Certainly it is no stretch to see the confusion and chaos that has interfered with a right relationship between men and women, husband and wife through the ages. The relationship between men and women has been broken down for many long years, as were the walls of Jerusalem. This brokenness has been evident both in a personal/couple sense as well as in the corporate sense of male/female leadership conflicts. The KJV used the word "rubbish" to refer to the hindrances to the rebuilding. It is from *aphar*, Strong's #6083: dry earth, dust, powder, ashes, earth, ground, mortar, rubbish. In Genesis 2:7 and again in 3:19 and 28:14, this same word is translated as "dust" in reference to the source material that Elohim used to create man. Is it a stretch to see then, that not only would there have been physical rubbish of stones, ashes, mortar at the remnant of the wall that made rebuilding difficult but also that another kind of dust, mankind, and in this case, contentious men, was also at work hindering the rebuilding? Though we don't know if any women participated in any hindrances directly, we do know of some daughters who were building the wall.

The word used for wall in all of these circumstances is the same word, *chowmah*, referring to some kind of wall, hedge, rampart or sheephold. Gesenius confirmed it is generally used of a wall around a city and also can be a metaphor for a chaste virgin woman. The concept of joining around a city seems to be reflected in the root word, *chabar*. We saw earlier that this root word could be used in various senses, as the coupling of the ephod, the curtains of the tabernacle and for my train of study here, for personal or political alliances as in marriage.

So there seems to be a recurring picture here of a wall, specifically where it states "*chowmah*," and a connection with women in some kind of alliance and protective role. A wall that is joined around a city encircles it in security and is designed, built and maintained with that purpose in mind. The picture from Song of Solomon adds that the Bride who is like a wall is "inclosed" which can mean latched, bolted or locked as it would for some kind of wall or fence, but also to have been provided with shoes or sandals.

I am quick to note that there are multiple layers of meaning here in this comparison of women, the Bride and walls. It is challenging as I view these metaphors almost mixing and matching. Some pertain specifically to an individual woman and couple, some to corporate groups and ultimately I believe it all pertains to those who have been "chosen to choose" Yeshua as our Bridegroom. I do not think that it is necessary to sort out which metaphor is the "right" one but more so that taken together, they provide another perspective on our Abba's plan for us.

This Bride picture covers a vast amount of time during which the original wall lay in ruins. It is envisioned in the spirit of a leader who is in covenant relationship with our Elohim and walks in it to exhort and encourage an alliance to rebuild the physical walls. Likened to a wall around the city as well as a chaste virgin, this wall has been broken down due to the discipline/death/exile of the people by our Elohim. The set time came to rebuild. Though this wall is YHWH directed to be rebuilt, every kind of opposition from within and without exists. This Bride, like the wall of the Tabernacle or the shoulders of the ephod, is coupled together to form a partnership. When this wall

is in place, at full strength and height, the city is no longer bearing the reproach and affliction of an unwalled place. This Bride takes shape when the people have a mind to work and strengthen their hands in Him, working together despite hindrance, confusion and rubbish. This Bride as wall picture will face every kind of distraction during the rebuilding process and will need to remain steadfast in the calling, learning to defend and build up at the same time. This Bride as a wall picture is to encircle the city of Jerusalem in security, providing a boundary, recognition of what is good to guard within and what is not good to keep without. This Bride as wall picture will ultimately be adorned with jewels in the foundation and pearls at the gate.

Vine's Expository Dictionary confirmed that the Septuagint connected this *chowmah* with *teichos* in the Greek which is used in the verses referring to the Wall around Jerusalem in Revelation, which is described in much the same language as so in Isaiah; bedecked/adorned with jewels as a Bride.

The image of the Bride as injoined, a wall, bolted, joined, secure can also be viewed in a more human metaphor as one who has been shod.

In the Song of Solomon, the Bride who deferred entrance to the Beloved had been provided with sandals. She was not walking in them at the time perhaps because she was concerned about defiling her feet. In any case, she endured a separation from Him and went out into the streets. Despite the easier time she had had earlier, with no hindrance by the watchmen, this time they hindered her to the point of beating her. Yet she endured and went on to be reunited with the Beloved, the Giver of the sandals, the jewels, the love, the covering.

A Bride who is unshod, is not confident in and who does not have the confidence of her Beloved will not be able to walk in peace and safety. She will be subject to the flesh; the mind, will and emotions more so than subject to her Husband and at peaceful rest in Him. She will be more at risk to prostitution and hindrance from the world system and the evil one. In her journey to find unity with her husband, she will endure many blows that hurt, yet these same blows will discipline and teach her in ways that will prepare her for the fullness of that alliance/marriage to come!

The restored Bride/wall with security and shod by the Beloved will have the full armor of our YWH, as described in Ephesians 6, particularly the sandals of the good news of peace. I couldn't help but reflect that these provided sandals would be associated with the priestly garments, those Levites who encircled the Tabernacle. They, whose name means 'attached' or 'joined' were there to guard and keep in what is good and keep out what was not good. As they walked in their full strength and height they were a wall to His Presence. When they did not walk so, they were like a Bride without peace/sandals and like a wall that is not injoined.

The city, also described as a Bride, will have no peace if the walls/sandals are not in place. The city will have no peace if the people do not have a mind to do the work and the willingness to cooperate. The city will have no peace if the clear boundary for recognition of what is good and not good does not stand strong and at full height.

Is it a difficult thing to also view this application to an assembly? While we are yet in the dispersion, Messiah has let us know that each of us is to treat our bodies as His Temple as His Spirit indwells us. Surely we can see the images already described as they may also apply to an assembly, though not yet back in the Land?

Jeremiah's contributions regarding the walls and the role of women renewed

Earlier, I referred to Jeremiah's observations.

In the context of relational struggles, may we consider the fall in the garden. Historically many faulted the woman and even took it to the point of considering women to be evil and dangerous. More recently consideration has been given to the man being at fault for failing to exercise his protective role as he stood by. I see this as a flawed perspective, more of the "either/or" mode of thinking. As I understand it, mankind, both male and female, have been given roles and the abilities to carry out those roles. In the garden, both failed to exercise their role. Whether or not it was due to deception on the woman's part and whether or not this disqualifies all women is an issue for another time and place. As I have seen more of the metaphorical picture of women as walls, I see that the alliance or joining of a marriage relationship brings both parties into a position where they can exercise their attributes as they fulfill their roles...or not. As a woman is described as a helpmeet, an *ezer knegdo*, she is like a wall. When fully standing, she is to speak for what is good and against what is bad for her spouse's well-being. Like a wall, she is to be a part of keeping in what is good and keeping out what is not good. I do not view this as a superior action but a collaborative one. When both are functioning as designed, both are more fully enabled in alliance with one another and with our Father.

You might say now that Abigail functioned as an *ezer knegdo*, or a wall at full encircling height when she intervened to save her household from Nabal's foolishness. He walked in revelry and drunkenness while she was sober. She recognized the great blessing that David and his men had been "as a wall" around their flocks and possessions. She spoke for what was right and against what was wrong, even bearing the responsibility personally, when clearly it was not her fault, thus being a wall herself for both her household and for David. When she realized that her husband had refused to honor David's request, her quick response in humility saved many lives and earned David's gratitude as well. He credited her with saving him from further killing. Upon hearing of Nabal's death, David asked her to become his wife and she joyfully accepted; now a joining or alliance for a common purpose.

Very recently, Janell Schroeder offered an additional related picture, a second witness. Considering the situation in Judges with Deborah and Barak, we are aware that there has been conjecture over the reasoning for his refusal to depart for battle without her presence. As one example, J Vernon McGee declares that Barak was a "sissy" for wanting to "hide behind a woman's skirts" rather than go into battle as a general.³ Though he declares this is not a bad reflection on her specifically and not on any women who are chosen by God to bring deliverance, he does declare that it is a poor reflection on the men at the time because they are not doing what they should be doing. He observes that Deborah didn't want to do this because she was a mother and rose up only because of the absence of male leadership. He acknowledges her song as a benchmark of beauty and praise. I suggest that this is a cultural overlay interpretation. Is it necessary to demean Barak and interpret a lack of character and courage when it may also be that he simply realized and acknowledged that together, he and Deborah were divinely directed to work together and were stronger in the Lord to accomplish their purpose? Certainly the Word tells us that it was their song together which extolled our Elohim. Janell saw a Messianic picture here. As our Messiah comes to conquer the wickedness in the world He comes with ten thousands of His saints, which surely must be His Bride. Those who are under His wing are to rule and reign with Him. (Matthew 19:28; Revelation 2:26-27, 3:21; 20:4, 6) I have written elsewhere of the "*quiet power of mature authority*" that is not threatened when one that

³ http://www.blueletterbible.org/audio_video/mcgee_j_vernon/Jdg/Judges.cfm#Judges_4_1_15

has been nurtured and encouraged to grow is eventually brought up to share in that original authority. The two becoming one, if you will.

There is yet another reference to a person as a wall found several times in Jeremiah, among them this:

Jer 15:19 Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.

Jer 15:20 And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

Jer 15:21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

The brazen wall referred to here is again *chowmah* and is given as a “thus saith the LORD” direction. So this wall is rebuilt when the one who returns to honor our Elohim turns away from what is vile and ungodly and speaks His Truth. He promises to strengthen and fortify this wall so that this restored Bride who seeks Him first will be able to prevail over opposition. Many, many associations come to my mind but I will only note a few here. The brazen aspect, also called bronze, provides additional strength and covering to protect what is inside. The altar and many tabernacle/Temple articles were covered with bronze. These things were primarily for the use of the Levites, those who were joined or attached in the most intimate relationship with our Elohim as they served him. As briefly noted above, though many associate the full gospel armor with a Roman soldier, remember that the description also fits that of priestly garments. Priests were warriors in many ways. Recall the zeal of Pinchas as he dealt with the mockery of the man of Israel who brought a Midianite woman in front of their eyes. Recall that the choir was made up of Levites as they brought forth high praise and that the priests went ahead blowing shofars on the way to fight. As have others, I have written elsewhere of the association of the Priest with those known as the Bride of Messiah. Mark Totillo has provided a presentation on the issue through *Rebekah at The Well* ministries.

*Jer 31:22 How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter?
for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, **A woman shall compass a man.***

And finally, I come to this picture; one that has been a puzzle for ages. There is no surprise that His people backslide and fall away from His ways, needing restoration. In the context of discussion of the restoration to come, our Abba included these words through Jeremiah. Though I have done a more thorough word study separately, may I just observe here that “go about” is from a very similar Hebrew word also translated as “go about” in the Song of Solomon, as the Bride wandered looking for her Beloved, and the observation that He had “withdrawn” Himself or gone away. Surely at that point, the Shulamite could have been called a backsliding daughter as she was not quickly willing to yield and admit her Beloved. Those who are familiar with Hebraic study will likely also know that the “new” thing in the earth referred to here can just as accurately be translated as re-newed, as we observe the “new moon” monthly while knowing that it is not newly made, but renewed to our sight. In brief, “To compass” implies to revolve, border, surround or to carry or fetch, used either literally or figuratively.

I have been reflecting on this passage and related ones for four years. There are three usual interpretations for how a woman might compass a man as a new thing.

³ [22] The woman must encompass the man: the words "with devotion," not in the Hebrew, are added for the sense. No fully satisfactory explanation has been given this text. Among the more probable are these:

(a) Formerly the man (the Lord) encompassed the woman (Israel) with mercy and devotion; now in the spiritual religion of Israel which will follow on the restoration, this order will be reversed.

(b) So secure will Israel be after the restoration that women will no longer need the natural protection of their husbands, but even weak women can protect men.

(c) St. Jerome in his commentary on this verse understood it of Mary's virginal conception of Christ. "The LORD has created a new thing on earth; without seed of man, without carnal union and conception, **"a woman will encompass a man' within her womb-**One who, though He will later appear to advance in wisdom and age through the stages of infancy and childhood, yet, while confined for the usual number of months in his mother's womb, will already be perfect man." ⁴

I still see some cultural overlay in these interpretations, but knowing that so many things are really "both/and" rather than "either/or," I submit that I see another picture here. In as much as an *ezer knegdo*, a bride, functions as one that supports what is good and speaks against what is bad, and a wall does likewise as it surrounds a city, and in as much as the city of Jerusalem is the type generally referred to, also related to being as a Bride, and in as much as the inclosed garden can be understand as being shod or provided with sandals, so do I see that it is possible to view this image of a woman encompassing a man as a renewed thing as being a reference to the time when the original design of human kind, male and female, will be restored, built up to again affirm the purpose and role of both men and women, collaboratively carrying out our Father's instructions in their design and function. When women are able to walk in the full height of their restored "wall" and thus function as a safeguard that collaborates with the male image of conquering or penetrating, we will see a restored Bride, fully shod in the Gospel of Messiah able to compass about or join together in a YHWH honoring alliance. And lest there be any forgetfulness, all of human kind, male and female, are also as a Bride to our Messiah.

Our Father, may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. I look forward to the day when Your people are fully committed and looking to You, when we join with You and Messiah Yeshua for the restoration that must come with and following the judgments, because Your Word says so. I am, we are, a wall in need of rebuilding so that we walk as You designed. I yearn for the day when the restored Bride, male and female, are mature and willing to walk in the same kind of quiet power of mature authority that You demonstrate in Your patience with us while we learn. Yet You have declared that You call us friend, and one day, Your Bride, sharing in Your reign. Please correct any misunderstanding presented here and blow

⁴ <http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah31.htm> New American Bible Copyright © 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. All rights reserved. Neither this work nor any part of it may be reproduced, distributed, performed or displayed in any medium, including electronic or digital, without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

*away what You do not want Your people to consider and affirm what is dependable, true and right.
B'shem Yeshua, haMaschiach, may it be so.*

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