

IN THE HAND OF THE VINTNER PT 2



[AUDIO VERSION](#)

It's wonderful to be with you again. This is part two of In the Hand of the Vintner. And this podcast was recorded on Saturday, the 10th of June 2023. Before I start to speak to you about pressing, I want to speak to you about that pulp that lies for a period of time with the juice that has just been squeezed out of the grapes. It is the skins that give the color and flavor to the wine. In a grape, the skin is the old mantle. Mantles are connected to gifting and positioning in the kingdom. So, we can see that your old mantle, the gifting you flowed in in the previous season contributed to the new wine of the season that is beginning. Nothing is lost. The crushing is not unto destruction but unto transformation! Solid grapes are transformed into liquid new wine. Everything that is vital to be carried into the new season in the form of revelation and spiritual substance is transferred into the liquid during the time when the juice and pulp lie together in the form of must.

In a similar way, a caterpillar is dismantled and becomes liquid inside the cocoon, before the same fundamental building blocks that built a caterpillar are then used to build a butterfly - something completely different from a visual point of view, and also operating in a totally different realm. Caterpillars can only walk on the ground or along a branch, but a butterfly can both walk on a branch or use its wings and soar through the air.

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When Joshua the high priest is stripped of his high-priestly garments and then given new garments of state and a new turban, it did not mean that his priestly function had ceased forever. We see this because when he is endowed with his new mantle and sits to receive his crown, the Lord tells Zechariah that this is a depiction of His Servant the Branch, who will operate in both the function of priest and king! The garments of state (or 'rich garments' some translations say) indicating authority to rule clothe a man with a priestly heart. So, Beloved, you are not losing your old mantle/ ministry. It has rather become flesh within your heart and the change in form and structure indicates a transformation and change in way of functioning and moving within kingdom parameters. Yet all that the Spirit has built within your heart remains and functions from within as you move in a new way and greater level of kingdom authority. The Word says He sees what you do in secret and rewards you openly. All the priestly service you have offered up in worship and prayer before Him have been seen and recorded by Heaven and you will be rewarded with a portion of kingdom authority and power in proportion to what you have practiced privately in your closet.

Now let's look at the second part of the wine preparation – the **PRESSING!**

1. Pressing is in essence done for the purpose of separation, in order to preserve that which is of value and to leave behind that which is appointed to be cast upon the compost heap. When the pressing comes and the skins are held back by some form of sieving barrier that does not allow any pulp to pass through., but the wine moves forward into a new chapter and season, free-flowing and without rigid structure.

The first thing to take note of is that pressing in wine production

comes from ABOVE. It is Heaven that initiates the pressing that brings the new wine into view. Most importantly, pressing triggers movement!! You are pushed forward towards the only available exit point, and as you are now in a different form to the remaining pulp and skins - only that which is liquid can move freely under pressing. Pressing triggers ACCELERATED FORWARD MOVEMENT both in wine making and in the Spiritual realm. That which is solid or fleshly can find no exit. The pressing operation is designed to SEPARATE FULLY AND FINALLY that which is fluid from that which previously housed and defined it.

2. Pressing is great pressure which causes COMPLETE SEPARATION. The barrier prevents the grape skins and pulp from moving with the juice. The grape skin/mantle has served its purpose, imparting depth, structure and colour to the new wine but it is the mantle of an old season and is left behind as the fermenting new wine moves through to the new chapter in the Spirit.

Is there anywhere in the Word that speaks of pressing? The word translated 'trouble' in Greek is 'thlipsis'. It means 'pressure, affliction, anguish, persecution, tribulation or trouble'. Now I've mentioned often the end time persecution of the Saints that is going to break out and we are already starting to see the signs of it in the West.

Those in eastern countries and the Middle East have already been experiencing that and in Africa for some time. But persecution is a form of pressing great pressure and persecution is allowed by the Lord because of what it achieves in us spiritually. The root of this word thlipsis means to crowd, to afflict narrow or to suffer tribulation. This word trouble is also used in the following verses:

2Co 1:8 For, brothers, we would not have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength; so much so that we despaired even of life. 2Co 1:9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, so that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead;

2Co 4:8 We are troubled^{G2346} on^{G1722} every side, ^{G3956} yet^{G235} not^{G3756} distressed; ^{G4729} we are perplexed, ^{G639} but^{G235} not^{G3756} in despair; ^{G1820}

2Co 7:5 For, G1063 when G2532 we G2257 were come G2064 into G1519 Macedonia, G3109 our G2257 flesh G4561 had G2192 no G3762 rest, G425 but G235 we were troubled G2346 on G1722 every side; G3956 without G1855 were fightings, G3163 within G2081 were fears. G5401

1Th 3:4 For G1063 verily, G2532 when G3753 we were G2258 with G4314 you, G5209 we told you before G4302 G5213 that G3754 we should G3195 suffer tribulation; G2346 even G2532 as G2531 it came to pass, G1096 and G2532 ye know. G1492

1Th 3:3 That no one [of you] should be disturbed *and* beguiled *and* led astray by these afflictions PRESSURE *and* difficulties [to which I have referred]. For you yourselves know that this is [unavoidable in our position, and must be recognized as] our appointed lot. **1Th 3:4** For even when we were with you, [you know] we warned you plainly beforehand that we were to be pressed with difficulties *and* made to suffer affliction, just as to your own knowledge it has [since] happened.

So here they are describing pressing or tribulation or affliction as the normal Christian life. The modern day church in the West especially, has not been prepared for this kind of living. But we, as the first fruits new wine offering, have been through our own individual crushings and pressings in the night of preparation. This is the sharpening of the tip of the spear.

When I was studying the pressing, the Spirit brought to mind another word He had given me some time ago. It was titled 'Cleansing His River'.

Do you remember the root word from which the Greek word meaning 'pressure' comes means 'narrow'. Pressing involves passing through a narrow gate and because the new wine is liquid, it passes through easily. In fact, it is the very narrowness of the available gate that ensures all the pulp stays behind! I am going to share with you a portion from 'Cleansing His River' that speaks of a similar narrow gate:

'I saw a mighty river of murky water and the river was composed of a great company of the Lord's people. It was being poured through a giant sieve

and after passing through this place, the water on the other side was crystal clear and still contained people being carried along by the force and power of these pure waters. Then I saw inside the sieve and there was a heap of debris that had been filtered out; branches and rocks and trash had been removed from the river and all of it was very dark in colour.

As I zoomed in closer, I saw that there were also demons which had been held back by the size of the sieve holes. Previously they had had considerable sway in the lives of some of the people in the river but the appointment with the sieve had broken their power over the people that had passed through. They tried with all their might to squeeze through and follow their victims but they could not. As I looked more closely amongst the debris, I saw some people had not passed through and I could see their hearts, which were completely dark. Although they had been a part of the river of God's people for some times, no light had ever entered their hearts and they had been masquerading as messengers of righteousness. The appointment with this sifting had exposed and removed them from the ranks of those who flowed on with the pure water. I saw the demons catch sight of them and immediately begin to inhabit their earthen vessels. This resulted in them being completely overtaken by demonic darkness.

Then I was shown the name of the sieve. It was written in big, bold letters round the top of the sieve - "Consecration". God's people were being brought face to face with a crucial choice as they were swept through this weir of sorts. Either they chose complete consecration to the purposes of God or they remained behind in the sieve with that which had made the river murky. It wasn't as if there was a loud announcement that this was the appointment they had come to. But each person was faced with the individual sieve hole they could pass through and the words 'enter through the narrow gate' was whispered deep in their hearts. No-one on either side could hear the choice they were being faced with and the movement of the river was very swift. It was a split-second moment in which they could choose complete submission and consecration.'

Do you remember I mentioned in part one that demons feed upon the energy generated by fleshly, carnal behaviour? Galatians 5:19,20 lists these fleshly sins. Often, carnal fleshly tendencies are passed down the generations and unless repented of, gain a strong foothold. Just as a baby leaves behind the placenta that has fed it in the womb and the severing of the umbilical cord cuts that relationship forever, so too, the demonic attachments that have held sway

from the wings during the season of preparation are held back by the pressing action and you move through to a new place of freedom, at times not even fully aware of what has been removed. Father holds back all that would be detrimental as you respond to the pressure by choosing the consecration gate. If, however, you look back fondly at something that is part of the pulp from the crushing and yearn to be closely associated with whatever it is, you are not going to be able to yield and move through to the new chapter. Remember Lot's wife. Something in Sodom was tugging at her heart and that attachment ended with her destruction.

In the account of the wedding at Cana, the cup of wine offered to the master of the feast is the firstfruits wine from water. Remember the firstfruits of a harvest belongs to the Lord and the rest of the wine cannot be used until that firstfruits vessel of new wine has been offered. Never before has wine been brought forth from water! This is a new precedent. Cana means 'reed, rod for measuring, bone, branch, balance'. This event at Cana is a prophetic depiction of bringing forth those who are bone of His bone, those who are part of His servant the branch; His measuring reed used to measure the temple in Revelation 11. Consider this, if your consecrated life is to be used as a measuring reed in His house, would He not take extra care to ensure the accuracy of the dimensions of that reed? Perhaps this will help you to understand the Holy Spirit's minute attention to detail when counselling you about areas in your life that need to change. That wine offered to the master of the feast was described as 'the best wine kept 'til last' and the instruction given was to 'draw out' a firstfruits cup full. In other words, an empty vessel was plunged into the stone jar and held under the surface until enough wine had flowed into it. Pictures in children's bibles always depict the servants tipping up that stone jar and pouring it out but that is not accurate.

Now let's talk a bit more about that narrow gate. The Word says 'narrow is the gate that leads to life and few find it'. Consider the bulk and size of the pulp left behind compared to the volume of new wine that that is pressed for the firstfruits offering. A lot gets left behind when that narrow gate is passed through. The pressing causes separation of all in one's life that represents rigid structure and essentially a form of order. So, this may translate as the removal of any pride of life and as one passes through this gate, there is a sense of being greatly reduced and being brought low. It's a feeling of, "Who am I that HE should take note of me?" It's humility. The Word says 'do not think of yourself more highly than you ought'. The pressing will take care of that. It's a

dismantling of what life consisted of in terms of success in the eyes of man, one's reputation in society, a removal of self-will or dependance on one's own understanding. All this is left behind in the pulp which stayed in the press.

Jesus was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, One from whom men turned their faces and they considered Him of no worth. This did not deter Him because all He wanted was to do the will of His Father. Pressing brings one to this place of sharp focus.

No-one thinks the new wine is better – except the master of the feast. Jesus was made of no reputation. As you are conformed to the image of Christ, you come to this place too. It doesn't matter what men think of you. It's God's opinion that counts. You want to hear Him say, "This is My beloved son in whom I am well pleased!"

During crushing, the Word is used as a hammer, breaking the rock of stubborn resistance to His will. During pressing the Word is used as a sharp tool of separation. It divides between soul and spirit and separates out that which is of the Spirit. Cooperate with the work of the Spirit as He works to identify that which is 'pulp' in your life and let it go.

For those who are new listeners, there is a post I often go back to, called 'The Transition Bridge'. You can download the transcript on the Storehouse page of my website. Just scroll down a little to that title. The principle of the transition bridge applies whenever one is going through change and there are 3 stages on that bridge – disorientation, recalibration, reorientation and finally, one steps off the bridge into manifestation. These stages can also be found in the production of the firstfruits new wine offering.

Disorientation

This is the crushing phase. There is the stripping of the old garment or mantle (in which your old identity lies). Think of Joshua the high priest in Zechariah 3. Once his priestly garment was removed, he must have experienced a moment of disorientation and panic. If he wasn't the high priest, then who was he? He knew his old way of functioning like the back of his hand and had no idea what was coming next.

Recalibration

This involves being aligned to a new updated standard of measurement, usually from the factory or headquarters. Joshua received a rich garment; a garment of state which had authority aligned to it. He was being prepared to operate in a very different dimension to his previous one. He was given a charge by God and a place to stand before the throne and received information about the seven eyes or seven spirits of God. This is where the pressing begins. He had to let go of his old understanding and way of functioning in order to be conformed or calibrated to a new way of being.

Reorientation

Here, Joshua is told to sit on a throne, given a new name 'My Servant, the Branch' and is informed he will be operating in both a priestly and kingly function. This man with a priestly heart would be ruling and reigning in a kingly role. This is the freshly pressed new wine poured into a golden vessel. The years of trying and testing in the prison are over and the new chapter is beginning.

Manifestation

This would be the crowning, anointing and release to function in the new form. For Joseph, this involved ruling and reigning from the right hand of Pharaoh, having been approved and chosen as having 'no equal'. This is the public declaration of the best wine kept 'til last, then freely distributed for others to taste and enjoy its superior quality. Jesus, the Firstfruits from among the dead had to ascend to His Father, before returning and teaching His disciples about the kingdom. He was in a different form to the body He had walked in before. It was only after the resurrection that He passed through walls.

Beloved, through the crushing and the pressing, God removes all from your life that would prevent you being fully led by the Spirit of God and this is fully necessary to function as a son of God. You have to be fully yoked to the Spirit of God. Where He leads, you follow, no questions asked – even if you don't understand why he is leading you in that particular direction. Fluidity, flexibility is of paramount importance in the days we are entering. We see in part, we understand in part but God knows everything, even the things that haven't happened yet on earth. The firstfruits new wine offering of this season we are entering will live a life that will be a plumbline for others that want to follow Christ. Paul said, "Follow me as I follow Christ". Your life will be a reed that can be used by others to align their lives to. The words of an old Steve Green song come to mind:

May all who come behind us

find us faithful
May the fire of our devotion
light their way
May the footsteps we leave
lead them to believe
And the lives we live
inspire them to obey...

Precious saints, we are pilgrims on the journey of the narrow road. May the Spirit supply all the grace and strength you need to joyfully submit to both the crushing and the pressing
Selah