



THE SERPENT'S TALE

David L. Henderson



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First published by Moment's Notice Press in October, 1996, *The Serpent's Tale* is now presented in e-book form by Aleph Branch, MNP's parent company. For this edition, a new Author's Introduction and dedication have been added; otherwise, the original text remains unaltered. Also included here are facsimiles of the original front and back cover art, as well as back cover text.

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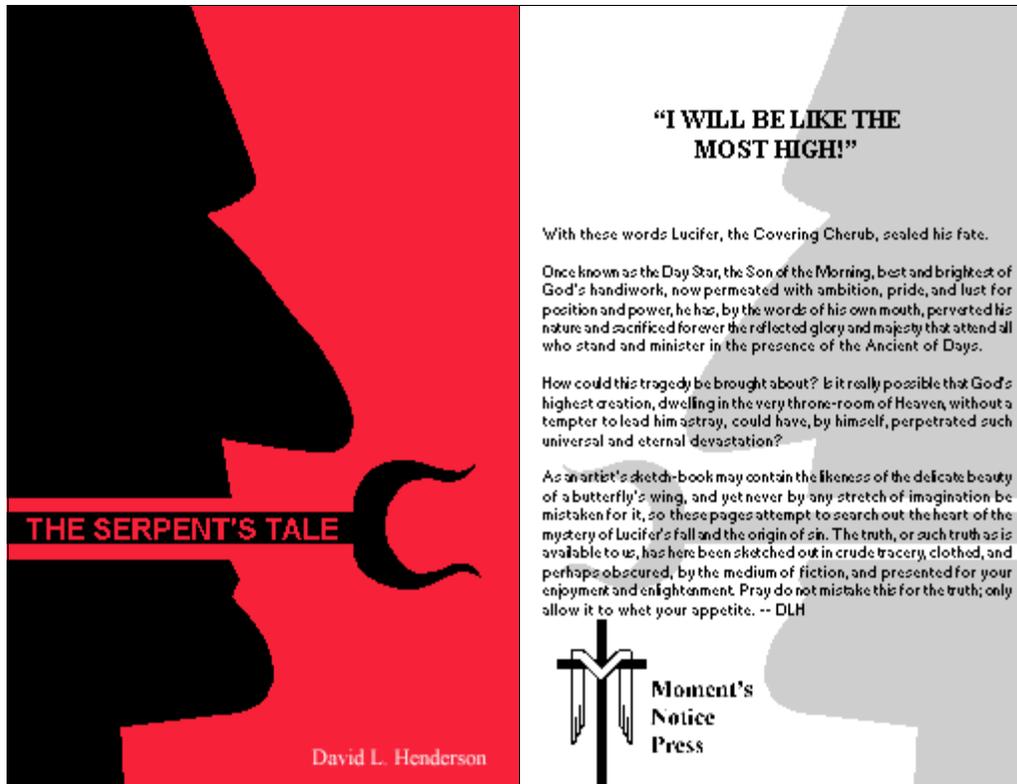
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“I WILL BE LIKE THE MOST HIGH!”

With these words Lucifer, the Covering Cherub, sealed his fate.

Once known as the Day Star, the Son of the Morning, best and brightest of God's handiwork, now permeated with ambition, pride, and lust for position and power, he has, by the words of his own mouth, perverted his nature and sacrificed forever the reflected glory and majesty that attend all who stand and minister in the presence of the Ancient of Days.

How could this tragedy be brought about? Is it really possible that God's highest creation, dwelling in the very throne-room of Heaven, without a tempter to lead him astray, could have, by himself, perpetrated such universal and eternal devastation?

As an artist's sketch-book may contain the likeness of the delicate beauty of a butterfly's wing, and yet never by any stretch of imagination be mistaken for it, so these pages attempt to search out the heart of the mystery of Lucifer's fall and the origin of sin. The truth, or such truth as is available to us, has here been sketched out in crude tracery, clothed, and perhaps obscured, by the medium of fiction, and presented for your enjoyment and enlightenment. Pray do not mistake this for the truth; only allow it to whet your appetite. -- DLH



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Representations of original cover art. Clock-wise from upper left: Front cover, back cover, enlarged view of back cover text.

New Author's Introduction and Dedication
for the 2003 electronic edition

This present incarnation of ***The Serpent's Tale*** represents yet another in a series of skirmishes in my ongoing struggle with modern technology. It isn't exactly as if I'm at war *against* technology, but rather that I'm simply trying not to be left behind. The twenty-first century seems determined to go off without me.

This little booklet was written in 1990, and finally came out in October, 1996, more or less an experiment in self-publishing. Becoming a publisher is neither difficult nor expensive in itself, but marketing and distribution are not for the faint of heart, and the actual manufacturing of the books themselves can run into real money.

Today, of course, options abound that would have been science fiction a few short years ago: laser and ink-jet printers, desk-top publishing software, and to top it all off, the Internet for virtually free storage and distribution. What an exciting time to be alive! I can hardly wait for Y3K!

Cheers,
David L Henderson
February, 2003

The Serpent's Tale would never have seen the light of day were it not for the loving support and encouragement of my dear wife, companion, friend and Valentine, Roxanne. I thank God for bringing her my way. (What she did to deserve me is, of course, anybody's guess.) Sweetheart, this one's for you.

FOREWORD

In the beginning, before Adam and Eve, even before Heaven, there was nothing but God. It's not possible to fully comprehend these things with our finite-mindedness; our whole experience is firmly rooted in births and deaths, beginnings and endings. But we know that God is eternal, without beginning or end, and that all else that exists was made by Him. There must have been a time, before He had made anything, when He existed alone.

His first creative act, I believe, was to make a place to live, an environment suited to Himself; a home base. God is a spirit-being, and so he made a spirit-dwelling, called Heaven. I could be wrong, but I never have believed that Heaven was a physical place within this physical universe. It may be that this universe exists within the confines of Heaven, but this is pure conjecture. In any case, it is apparent that Heaven existed before the Earth was created.

What then? After He created Heaven, what would He do? Remember, God, who is alone, has the power to accomplish anything He desires to do. I think He would create a staff of servants to run the house. And with that much house to run, He'd need a whole host of servants, divided into hierarchies, with leaders and underlings, a regular chain of command, each one answerable to his direct superior.

Since these servants are to populate a spiritual environment, they must be spirit-beings, created of spirit-substance. God, the omni-potent creator, has the power to create beings who are of spirit-substance similar to His own substance, with the one outstanding difference that these created beings are created; as spirits they are eternal-future, but they have a definite beginning. I say eternal-future to indicate the quality of un-ending; I believe that spirit-substance, once it has been created, cannot be un-created, or destroyed. This fact alone explains the existence of Hell: a mad dog must be destroyed; if it cannot be destroyed, then it must be contained.

The Serpent's Tale is the story of one spirit-being, an angel of the highest order, once called Lucifer. It is written in first-person, which does not mean that I didn't try to write a more conventional narrative full of Scripture references and such. I tried hard, several times. This was the only way I could get it to come together, no doubt symptomatic of a limited

imagination. As you may know, there are only two places in the Bible where any detail is given concerning the fall of Lucifer: Isaiah 14: 12-20, and Ezekiel 28: 11-19. This is my way of giving flesh those bare bones.

This story was completed in October, 1990. After an abortive attempt to publish it in the fall of 1991, the manuscript was left to collect dust for several years. Now, at last, the time has come.

I pray you will find these things enlightening and encouraging; these pages, few as they are, represent about eight years of study and prayer, and at times despair of ever penetrating the truth about sin's origin.

May the Holy Ghost minister to you as He has to me through these Scriptures, and may God bless you.

David L. Henderson
October, 1996

I **awoke** and looked about. Curiosity and wonder filled me and surrounded me like an ever-expanding sphere; knowledge broke over me in waves and answered my wondering. Before me was my creator and my God, the Ancient of Days; by Him and for Him alone was I created.

He spoke, and I trembled at the sound of His awesome voice; "Yes, I see that this, too, is very good." He is satisfied with me? Then I am complete. I knew, had known from the beginning, who and what I was, what I was created to be; I was a servant of the Most High God.

Around on every side of us, when at last I turned my attention, were my brethren. How can I tell you of their number, you, who are aware of little that does not actually touch your frail skin? If I spoke of millions, or of billions, you would perhaps be content, but let me assure you, even the word "number" misleads you. We are a multitude, quite literally, without number.

I was presented to them, not as the youngest or newest brother, but as their superior. I was quite aware that they were created before me, but they were not in any sense older than I; rather, they were created in anticipation of me; their creation was preparation for my arrival. I was, in fact, the crown jewel, the final finishing touch that made creation complete. I speak without arrogance; this is simply the truth.

No attempt will be made to convey to you the passage of time. Since our existence is not cut into blocks of alternating light and darkness, there is no need to consider time at all. We simply worked and lived and obeyed the Ancient of Days, and each moment was full. Think now, when you are happiest, when you are busy with joy and laughter, does not the day seem to slip by, until the dusk takes you by surprise? Do you not say, "What, is it that late already?" There is a place of fullness of joy, a place of obedience, of accomplishment, of productive activity, where counting minutes is simply out of place.

How well I can recall, even now, the recognition of my awesome purpose, in those first moments of awareness. As I stood wrapped in the love of Him to whom I belonged, just as I had recognized my superiority over my brethren, so I saw myself in true perspective to the Father of Lights. With the others, there was a sense of sameness that accompanied the superiority. Even as they looked upon me with admiration and respect, there was no denying that I was one of them. We were servants together. With Him it was different. I was filled to overflowing with abject obedience; there is no "I" in His presence, there is only "Thou", and it was my utter and

unspeakable delight to have it so. I existed to serve Him only, to discover His desire and fulfill it to the extreme limits of my capacity to do so. Try to imagine my joy, then, when I discovered His desire.

I had, for an instant, thought to fall at His feet, to express my inferiority, my emptiness in His presence, but before that thought could mature into action, He caught me, and His face held that look that I have come to recognize as the face of the teacher. "I have created no weakness in you; I am above you, but it is my strength, my superiority, not your inferiority, that you must express. For this task you are created, to express my excellence. In you I have placed words of praise, songs of joy, shouts of gladness, and the dance of ecstasy. These are your nature, your being. Use them as tools, wear them as garments, and express to all creation my greatness.

"The creature is not exalted for his own merit, but as the Creator is exalted, so is the creature. You and your brethren are my handiwork. Exalt my strength, and your strength will increase. Lift your voice in praise, and you will be lifted up. Sing, and my glory will light the depths of your being, and your joy will be full."

The truth of His words filled me, and I understood. His glory, that golden, piercing light that would, to one of you, have been as tolerable as a blast furnace, that glory shone upon me, and through me, and echoed back from me, to just that extent that I expressed His glory in the song, the dance, the shout, and the word. Nothing I did could increase the glory of the Almighty, but I could increase my participation in it. And how I desired to participate! Again He spoke:

"Your brethren look to you, for thus I made them, and thus I made you. They share in my glory as you lead them into it. I place in your hands one of every three of them, and together you shall lift up the praise of your God and Creator, that my glory may be known among them all. You are for them the light-bearer; I name you now Lucifer, the Day Star."



I **The praise** of Him who sits upon the throne--this was my task, and my joy. How we worked! How we sang, and played, and danced to music such as you, with but ears to hear with, could never dream of. And such dances! To many of my company were given, at my request, wings, that the dance might be expressed to the utmost reaches of the Great Hall, above the heads of the choirs and the dancers; as we lifted our voices, they lifted up their very bodies and became as living lamps, stars in that heaven of heavens. And as we sang, as we danced, as we called to one another, "Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God Almighty!", the glory of the Ancient One poured forth from the throne like clouds of splendor and light, like waves of beauty. It enveloped us, and it changed us. It blurred the distinction between us until we became as one, a sea of molten love, washing from side to side, from the throne to the outer-most draperies.

I had purposed within me that at each Holy Convocation, the efforts of my company would exceed those of the last, that I would find some new means of expression, some nuance that would please the Father of Lights. My gifts for such work were not few. In the day that I was created, the workmanship of every instrument of praise was placed within me. I was created to be the very source of music. The singers sang, but I made the song. The dancers danced, but the dance was mine. The players played, but the instruments were designed by me alone. And so it was that each Holy Convocation displayed the signs of strenuous labor, of extreme endeavor.

Do not be misled; the labor of the preparation was equal in joy to the ecstasy of the performance. As I crafted each note of each song, as I tested one phrase against another, or one soaring leap beside another, I seemed to hear in my bosom the voice of Him who sits upon the throne, "Well done; you have pleased me yet again." And so the work progressed, and each time, at each Holy Convocation, came the smile, that extra little twinkle in the eye of the Ancient One, and then the ultimate reward: "You have done your work well, and I am pleased."

But such rewards were not, I discovered, ultimate. There came a time when I was summoned, by Gabriel, who captains the hosts of couriers, to the Hall of the Right Hand of Power.

How shall I describe the Hall? It is an anti-chamber to the Great Hall, somewhat smaller in size, but of infinite importance. It is a conference room, a place where great plans are discussed and decisions are made.

To the Hall I was escorted, and there I waited, not sure what was about to transpire. Presently I was joined by the Right Hand Himself.

The Right Hand is God, just as He who is called the Seven Lamps is God, but He is not the Ancient of Days, do you see? He is present at all Holy Convocations, so I was no stranger to His presence, but this meeting, in His Hall, was different. I knew that this would be something new, outside my realm of experience. His smile, the twinkle of merriment in His eyes, told me this. How little I was prepared for what He said!

"My servant, you have done well at your task, and it is my delight to reward you. It is the nature of God-hood to exalt, in due season, those who humble themselves in obedience under the mighty hand of God, as you have done continuously since the day you were created. Your gifts and talents have been exploited to their limits, as have the brethren we have given into your hands. As you well know, you were created superior to your brethren in every way; you were, and are, the pinnacle of all our creative efforts.

"There is none among the hosts of the Most High like you, but henceforth, you will wear, to identify you as the exalted one, this breast-plate. As you praise the Almighty, and as our glory radiates about you and through you, the gold and precious stones of this breast-plate will catch those rays and scatter them in a multitude of colors, until all who join in the song and the dance, those who shout and praise with the voice will be bathed in splendor. The glory of God shall rise like a flood, a flood of light, a flood of beauty, and henceforth, because of you, my servant, like a flood of color. So rejoice, for your God is pleased with you!"

"My Lord," I cried, and immediately began to pour forth in volumes of praise the likes of which I had not known before. He placed the breast-plate upon me, and at once it responded to His glorious presence with showers of exquisite color, so that He was surrounded by myriad rainbows, each of its own several color or hue or tint.

Even before I was released from His presence, I was already forming in my bosom ways to use this gift to heighten the intensity of praise at the next Holy Convocation. This was, after all, my appointed task.



III My work proceeded Convocation by Convocation, each surpassing the last in excitement and splendor, and the praise of the Ancient One also increased. My brethren, those assigned to my company, were at first astonished, then in complete awe of the breast-plate placed upon me by the Right Hand of Power. Its great stones would catch the smallest ray of light and send it forth again, fairly rending the air with a two-edged blade of color and beauty. In the Great Hall, it became an instrument, played by the Glory of the Almighty, and flooding the chamber in an ebb and flow of delight. How could anything greater be possible? My determination to continuously exceed my efforts seemed doomed to failure; here was, I thought, the limit. I could do no better. I was nearing the far reaches of my gifts. Again I was summoned into the presence of the Right Hand...

There are, in the Throne Room, a number of my company of brethren, hand-chosen by myself, who wait in the Presence continually, calling to one another the praise of Him who sits upon the throne. These brethren are the leaders of praise during the Holy Convocations, and meantimes they stand around the outer draperies of the Throne Room. About the throne itself there are four, higher than the rest, whose place it is to establish a living veil about the Holy Person. Their wings intertwine together, and they form a room-within-the-Room.

Within this veil of wings, just before the Throne itself, there is a smoking altar, which burns forever with coals of fire. I have no speech with which to explain to such as you how it happens; accept, if you can, my word that as praise pours forth from this company of brethren, it issues into the inner circle of wings and into the very Presence of God as the smoke of incense from off the altar. No matter the means of the praise, whether in song, or dance, or the shout, or the glorious splendor of the breast-plate, it all billows forth from the altar in great clouds, surrounding the throne. You have heard, perhaps, that He inhabits the praise of His people? We were his people, and the very atmosphere He breathed was our praise pouring forth from the smoking altar.

In the Hall of the Right Hand of Power, I was again rewarded for my unflagging diligence. Had I reached the limits of my gifts? Then my gifts must be increased yet again. As before, my participation in the Glory of the Ancient of Days was to be increased. I would, hence-forth, direct His praise from within the Throne Room itself. Indeed, I was given, to my complete amazement and joy, a pair of sandals with which I was to mount

the smoking altar itself; to walk to and fro among the stones of fire, to add my voice to the cloud of incense within that holiest of holy places. The Right Hand of Power, it seems, has no limits to reach in rewarding those who serve in humility and obedience.

I returned to my tasks with renewed vigor. From my exalted position before the throne, I saw many things differently. I saw the Ancient of Days, as His glory grew according to the honor and praise we expressed in His Presence. I came to a sort of knowledge concerning that inexpressible relationship between the Ancient One and the Right Hand of Power and Him who is called the Seven Lamps. If only you could fathom such wonders as I saw and marveled at! But you can't, no more than I could; but I could at least look and wonder, while you, most of you at least, refuse even to look, and those who look shy away.

To attempt to describe the new heights of glorious praise to which I and my company were transported would be like weighing the relative pleasures of a refreshing swim in a pool of molten steel, as opposed to, say, molten aluminum. Suffice it to say that, with each reward that was bestowed upon me, my responsibilities increased many fold, as well as my abilities, and my joy as well. The sandals with which I trod the stones of fire caused me to burn; I was involved in the smoke of Holy incense and I was changed. My breast-plate, adorned with precious stones to catch the rays of His eternal Glory, focused those rays, not only outward, but inward as well. They flooded my being with light and beauty and, yes, even glory.

The Throne Room became for me a chamber of intense pleasure and joy, a place of exquisite peace in the midst of riots of excitement, music, shouting and dancing, laughter and praise. And all this in that ever-present atmosphere of smoke, billowing out in rainbows of color and fragrance, clouds of passionate praise; and there, walking up and down among the stones of fire, was I.



IV I entered that great conference room, the Hall of the Right Hand of Power. To one side stood a small contingent of lesser servants and messengers; across from me were the Right Hand and He who is called the Seven Lamps. I fairly trembled at the enormity of power in the Hall. At last the Right Hand spoke:

"We are greatly pleased, our servant. Our every expectation has been met to the full, and we rejoice in you. Once again the time has come to exalt one who has faithfully executed his responsibilities with humility and obedience.

"We are in a position unique even for us, with whom uniqueness is a given. You were created, as you know, far superior to your brethren; indeed, you are the last and the best we have done so far. Your wisdom and beauty were not to be surpassed even from the beginning, and they have increased since then. We have, as we saw fit, exalted you, placed ever greater responsibilities upon you, with corresponding abilities and gifts with which to carry them out. You have grown to the extreme limits of your capacity, and yet we are not satisfied.

"Until now, you have been our servant. You have acted in meekness and obedience; you have discharged your responsibilities with joy and incomparable diligence. We find no fault at all in you; yet, I say again, we are not satisfied."

I marveled. Before, whenever I had been summoned to this Hall, I had received rewards of a completely unimaginable nature. Each time, when I thought I had surely reached the limit, the limits were extended. Now I was being told, by the Right Hand Himself, that those limits could not be extended. Was I to be replaced, perhaps by some new creature with greater capacities? Whatever was about to befall me, I was convinced by my knowledge of God that it would be to my benefit, but I could not help wondering. He continued:

"We wanted music, and so we created in you the workmanship of every variety of musical instrument; we gave you complete understanding of music in all its forms. You, therefore, produced for us music. We wanted the praise of the voice and the dance, and you used our gifts to produce the songs, the shouts of praise, and the leaping, soaring dances that fill us with delight. In every case, we express our desire, and then we bestow upon you the gifts with which to fulfill the desire. We have placed upon you abilities, and then responsibilities. Now is the time when we must bridge the gap; we will place upon you the mantle of authority."

Quite frankly, I was stunned. The very word "authority" was unspoken among the brethren; it was very nearly the equivalent of the nature of Godhood itself. I understood responsibility, but authority was well out of my class. Just imagine: the ability to choose your words, and speak them, to be the author of your own words instead of speaking words given to you by someone else. How could I, a created thing, bear the weight of authority? I had no words to say that were my own; of what use could authority be to me?

I would have asked these questions, had I been bidden to speak. But the Right Hand of Power drew my attention to Him who is called the Seven Lamps:

"You are, for a season, released from your normal duties. He who is called the Seven Lamps, who is the essence of the power of the Father of Lights, the author of authority, will be your instructor and teacher. You will receive guidance and counsel, and when you are ready, the mantle of authority will be given you. Go now, and know that your Lord is well pleased."

As the season of training proceeded, I began to grasp the import of the thing that was to befall me. As a servant, I operated solely out of obedience; I merely gave back to the Father what He had given to me to give Him. I praised because He wanted praise, and I could praise because He made me thus. I had, in truth, originated nothing. I could not, for I was a created being, capable only of obedience. Was God pleased with me? Then He was pleased with Himself, for I was naught but what He made me. And if He was pleased with Himself, then He was worthy of praise. This I saw, as I had not seen before. The Ancient of Days, creator of all that is, likes what He has done, therefore He deserves to be honored. But who will honor Him? He has no peers; He is unique, alone. This has been the essence of our praise from the beginning. He created us, the brethren, to honor the one who is worthy of honor, and now He has honored me.

Authority is the key to God's power. I, who was created without it, understand it far better than you possibly could, who take it for granted. He who is called the Seven Lamps has showed these things to me. The power requires two elements: an inner image of the desire, and the word of authority. I exist because, long ago, the Ancient One desired one such as I; He planned and considered, He decided and discussed with the Right Hand of Power, until finally His image of me was complete. Then came the Word: "Lucifer, Be!" And I was.

The great Author fashioned a desire into an image, and then gave a name to the image. The Word called, and I could not but answer; that is authority. And now it would be mine.

I am a servant, created to obey, and obey I did. But obedience can only praise, it cannot worship. Worship requires authority. It must spring from an inner image and flow forth from the lips of the worshipper. To proclaim that the Ancient of Days is Almighty is no more than to repeat an obvious truth, a fact. This is, after all, the nature of praise. Worship, however, is no simple acknowledgment of truths; it involves the person of the worshipper expressing his inner image of God.

When the fullness of time was come, I received the mantle of authority. Once more, and yet for the first time, I experienced something so radically different from what I had known that I could not have expected it, nor perceived its existence. It was as if a hole appeared over my head, and I was drawn upward into a new Heaven, one where all rules had been changed. I could no longer look at my brethren and feel that "I am one of you"; I was, indeed, something else.

Back to work I went, no longer fulfilling my responsibilities; I was initiating my own actions at last. I burned to create, not just music, but new kinds of music; not just dances, but whole languages of movement and form and beauty. It may be that the colors that now flowed from my breastplate sprang from somewhere within my being, and were more than just reflections of God's glory. Do you see? Can you see? This was worship! Of course I cried "Holy! Holy! Holy!" But now I could see, in my inner-most being, His Holiness; it was there, in my inner image, and I spoke it out, not in obedience, but with authority. My company of brethren saw the difference, but they could not participate in my authority, my creativity. They sang the songs and danced the dances, but they could not do what I did. They are servants, and they can only obey. And they obeyed me.



V How can I expect you to grasp the change in the atmosphere of Heaven? I doubt that your languages contain the words with which to express such subtle, yet such obvious qualities. Our pleasure in our work multiplied, and the level of joy at the next Holy Convocation was raised to an astonishing pitch.

It had become almost customary for the Ancient One to favor me, from time to time, after a Convocation, for example, with a smile and "Well done." But since the gift of authority was placed in my hands, these rewards came nearly continuously, and their content became quite copious. My company of brethren were impressed with the quality of the praise and worship which I was able to orchestrate. I must say that there is a distinction to be made between receiving a smile and a word of praise from God, and receiving thousands such smiles and words from the myriad underlings and servants around me. And if only you could have seen Michael's troop of soldier angels saluting me with their little swords!

Truly, I came to enjoy the times spent in the Throne Room the most. The smoking altar, the stones of fire, it all seemed like home to me, like such a place was the proper abode of one so gifted as I. Away from the lesser brethren, the message carriers and the common workers, the Presence was a place where we who wielded authority could commune together. Yes, it was there that my skills with worship were honed to a razor's edge. Each nuance of song or of shout immediately brought forth a renewed intensity in the clouds of smoke, in the fire of the altar. I stood, or walked, among the stones, and I felt the fire flow through me. I breathed the smoke, and my worship seemed to be the smoke, billowing out of my mouth and filling the inner veil of wings.

How I came to appreciate the Father of Lights as Creator. I understood, since I was now a participant in the creative process, the intricacies of bringing into being a creature capable of the things I was capable of. He was, and is, worthy of praise if for no other reason. Can you see the divine irony? He is to be praised because only He could have created me, and only one such as I could praise Him as He deserves to be praised. The more I think of it, the more I delight in the spectacular rightness of it all. He and I, we fit together, hand and glove. We complement one another. And has He not, on occasions too numerous to count, expressed His pleasure in me? Am I not the very crown jewel of Heaven?

I began to suspect that He had a plan, a purpose He had not yet expressed to me. Not for nothing did He place His own power in my hands;

He was testing me. If I could but determine the nature of the test, I could pass it. He wanted me to use the authority, that much was certain. But how? What was it that I should create, that He could not, or would not, create Himself?

I contrived to make use of my time to ponder the question, until at last I felt I had the answer. But how could it be? Surely this must be out of the question. I can not even believe such a thing...

Try if you will to follow my thinking: The Ancient of Days has repeatedly bestowed upon me gifts and honors and rewards. At each occasion, when I felt there was no way He could exalt me any higher, He came up with some new thing, a by-passing of all previous limits. Now, with this latest gift, the mantle of authority, surely this must be the ultimate, the very extreme. But is it? At present, I am the highest created being in Heaven, inferior only to the God-head. If the idea were not total nonsense, I might try to imagine how He would go about exalting me to that last step: deity, a Fourth Person. But no, that simply is not so. I, who of all God's servants must know the truth, cannot entertain the thought as anything other than blasphemous nonsense.

But what if? Suppose it was for this reason that He gave me authority? Do I not use the power of the Almighty to bring to pass things that are not? Is this the test, to devise a way to exalt the creature into the realm of the Creator? And how, I keep asking myself, can it be, if I know the entire idea to be unreal, utterly beyond belief?

I pondered for a long time. I became convinced that God had placed upon me a supreme test, that if only I could find the key, I would be exalted to the ultimate limit. And of course, at last I found the key. It was there all the time.

As I have said, authority requires two elements, the inner image, and the word of command. I felt that I could build an inner image of myself upon a throne, seated beside the Most High God, but I could not make it so, simply because I could not believe in that image. No, this would not be easy. I would have to work from a different angle: I must find a way to bring that image into the realm of the possible. Then, and only then, could I believe it, and so speak the word of authority that would bring it to pass.

The difficulty rests on my knowledge of the truth. You see, I knew that no created being can be equal with the Eternal God. This was the basis for the praise and worship that I had carried out since the day I was brought forth by the Word of God. The Word? The Word of God brought me into

being? Of course! That was the key! I must use that same Word to make the impossible possible!

My task, then, was to form the image within my inner-most parts, an image of myself seated upon a throne with God (which I knew was impossible). Then, I could speak with the authority God had given me, not to bring that image to pass, but just to make it possible. I would work on the other later. First things first...



VI My plans were complete. I had formed in my inner-most being an image of my desire; I saw myself, seated upon a throne within the veil of wings, beside the Ancient of Days. All that remained was the speaking of the word of authority that would push that image into possibility. I called together my company of brethren. I knew that, when my plan reached fruition, I would have in them a personal staff of obedient servants at my beck and call; had not the Ancient One Himself given them to me?

I reminded them, as if they could forget, that I was their commander, their superior. I told them that, though I could not yet offer them specific details, there were about to take place certain changes, and those who followed me without fail would find themselves appropriately rewarded. I recalled to them the rewards with which I had been repaid for my obedience; their awe of me and my position made the parallel obvious.

At last it was time. I summoned my strongest voice; I felt the mantle of authority swelling against me like a stiff breeze. I leaned into it; I closed my eyes. I saw the inner image. I spoke:

I WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN

And I saw the image of myself move, as I had moved so many times, into that inner circle where the Almighty sits upon the throne. My courage solidified, and I spoke again:

I WILL EXALT MY THRONE ABOVE THE STARS OF GOD

I was accustomed to standing before His throne; now, I could see myself mounting a throne of my own, receiving the gaze of wonder and, yes, praise, of all the brethren. I was getting stronger. I felt as if I stood on the brink of success; I took another step:

I ALSO WILL PRESIDE OVER THE HOLY CONVOCATION

It was coming; I could feel it. Oh, how I had waited and planned for the day when I would sit with the God-head instead of standing before them! I could not stop:

I WILL ASCEND ABOVE THE BILLOWING CLOUDS OF INCENSE

Can it be that once I was a servant, like those meek, pathetic laborers and couriers who look at me with such surprise on their foolish faces? Yes, look at me! I am no servant, I am master; I am a great rolling stone, crashing inexorably toward my divine destiny!

I WILL BE LIKE THE MOST HIGH

And there it was! I could see it! There was a sound of thunder, multitudes of feet marching; shouts of, of what? Dismay? Confusion and chaos? How? Why? Had I not passed the ultimate test of God?

I stood face to face with Michael, the Captain of the Lord's Hosts. His face burned with anger; his sword leaped to his hand. I called once again to my hosts, and they gathered behind me. At once we were surrounded, as Michael and Gabriel and their minions began to push us back, back, out of the Place of the Most High. We were being swept out, as easily as one might chase a mouse with a broom. My loyal company made a respectable attempt to stand their ground, but we were outnumbered. I gave the command to cease resisting, and we allowed ourselves to be driven from our home.

The episode was quickly over. Why? Why? I tried to fit the pieces together. Only one answer would fit what I already knew; this must be yet another test. Yes! That must be it. An unexpected obstacle, designed to put me off balance, to hide from me the fact of my success; for I had succeeded, that much I knew. I could conjure up at will that image: Me, endowed with Deity, seated alongside the Father of Lights, receiving the praises of the brethren. And not only could I see it, I could at last believe it. The mantle of authority had done its work, and now I could move on to the next phase. Now that I could believe in the image, I could speak the image into reality with that same authority. But first, I must overcome this present obstacle. One more test, one more test, one more test, and then nothing can stop me...



VII MICHAEL'S NOTE

I cannot let this account end without adding a note of truth to explain some of the errors contained herein. When the Father of Lights ordained that the account of Lucifer's fall be published abroad, I was given the task of causing that Serpent to relate the story from his own point of view. You must understand that most of the story stands as written. Lucifer's account of those events is accurate up to the point of the fall. Beyond that, naturally, his story is flawed, so here is the matter from another angle.

I will not try to convey to you the awesomeness of Lucifer's position as Commander of the Praise of the Most High. Understand that the rewards he received were well deserved. At the end, however, his pride led him to attempt something no one had ever tried before, and the mantle of authority, the Anointing, made it possible for him to succeed, after a fashion.

Lucifer desired to be like God, but he knew this to be impossible, for a created being can never be equal with an uncreated, Self-existent God. Lucifer knew this, but he tried to circumvent that obstacle by overcoming the belief factor. If he could believe it, he thought, he could make it possible; then, if he could make it possible, he could make it happen. Well, he didn't. He succeeded, not in making it possible, but in making himself believe that it was possible. In short, Lucifer created within himself the ability to believe a lie; he created the sin of unbelief. In his attempt to become like the Father of Lights, he became the father of lies.

The creature known as Lucifer no longer exists; the extensive damage done by the act of sin has irreversibly changed him. He is now Satan, that Serpent, who, incidentally, still believes that he is just on the verge of becoming God. So embedded is the lie he believes, that he has challenged God to a confrontation, a test of power. One day, God will answer the call, and we will forever sweep the Serpent from the Universe. Until then, he continues to plan and plot his next move. He no longer bears the mantle of authority, though he believes he does; his ability to believe lies permits him to believe almost anything, except the truth.

One more thing: there is an error commonly believed among you that Lucifer's sin was pride. This is mostly false. It is true that pride leads to destruction, but it is not the sin itself. Pride is a God-given quality that prompts one to, say, work diligently at one's job, or wear appropriate clothing. If it is mis-used, or taken out of its proper place, it becomes self-idolatry, which, as we have seen, will lead to that most basic of all sins, unbelief.

Appendix A: THE SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 14: 3, 4, 12-20

3 And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve,

4 That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!

12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

16 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;

17 That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?

18 All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house.

19 But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet.

20 Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou has destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.

Ezekiel 28: 11-19

11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus sayeth the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

13 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was

thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

14 Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

18 Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

19 All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.



Appendix B: EXPLANATORY NOTES

In my research for *The Serpent's Tale* I gathered a quantity of information that I felt should be included, but that could not be presented in story form. That information will be dealt with briefly in the following paragraphs.

WILL

That precious commodity that we take so for granted, free will, is not, and was not, available to the angelic beings. The angels were created to be servants, to follow orders; in searching the Scriptures, I have not found a single instance, apart from Lucifer's fall, of an angel initiating his own actions or words.

What of those angels who followed him? They had been placed under his command; their prime responsibility was to obey him. When he sinned, he naturally led them into sin as well. Could they have rebelled, turned to God and been preserved? I honestly don't know. All I can say is that, by following Lucifer into sin, they became partakers in his judgment, eternal Hell.

ANOINTING

Without a free will, it is apparent that Lucifer could not have done the things he did, until God anointed him. The anointing is a dispensation of God's power, placed upon a person to enable them to accomplish a specific task. Isaiah 10: 27 says that the anointing destroys the yoke of bondage. The anointing broke for Lucifer the barrier that separates the servant from the master, and he cast off his yoke of servitude.

You and I are born anointed. It is beyond the scope of these notes to fully explore anointing, but suffice it to say that when God made Adam, He placed in him a spirit that communicates directly with the power of God.

We each have a place in God's plan, a purpose for which we are designed; we are, therefore, equipped from the womb with a special "slant" on our own in-born anointing that draws us toward that purpose. That is what enables even the un-born-again to be gifted doctors or musicians or architects.

Norvel Hayes says that the anointing will do for you what a phone booth

did for Clark Kent. That's true, but you have to be aware that the anointing is there; the vast majority of humanity, even those who are born again, wander aimlessly, never knowing the "pearl of great price" that exists within them. Like all of God's gifts of grace, it must be accessed through faith, and faith requires knowledge. In order for an anointing to operate, demand must be made upon it. Lucifer made demand by speaking words; we make demand precisely the same way.

POWER

You may not have thought much about it, but God has only one kind of power, and that power can only be operated through the speaking of words. God had to say, "Let there be light!" or there would not have been light. The entire first chapter of Genesis is a list of things God said, putting His power into action. He made demand on the power with words.

We're all familiar with Mark 11: 23-24: "For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

Jesus had spoken to the fig tree, and it had died. Now he tells the disciples that having the faith of God means believing that the things you say shall come to pass. The reason many of us don't have the kind of success that we'd like is that we don't believe that our words will come to pass. This preacher's or that one's words might come to pass, but we're sure that our own words won't. Unless we believe, and then open our mouth and make demand on the power, our situation will not change.

SPIRITS

There are three kinds of spirits, similar to each other in many ways, yet with distinct differences. God is a spirit; He is the source of all spirits. He is the one self-existent spirit, eternal-past and eternal-future, with neither beginning nor end.

The angelic beings are also spirits, but they are not self-existent; they are created spirits. One of the characteristics of a spirit is that it cannot be destroyed. Therefore, the angels are eternal-future, without end, but they are not eternal-past. Each one of them has a definite beginning.

Job's young friend, Elihu, said, in Job 32: 8, "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Down on the inside of every human being there resides a spirit, an eternal part, put there by God. This is the source of the in-born anointing that belongs to us. The human spirit is our link with the realm of the spirit.

The individual who is not born again is spiritually dead. When Adam sinned, we know he did not die physically, though the death process began then. He did not die soulically; his mind, emotions, and will remained intact. It was his spirit that died. Did it cease to exist? Of course not; spirit-substance cannot cease to exist. It simply lost contact with the spirit realm. The un-born-again person carries around within him a spirit that is unable to function as a spirit. It is nearly dormant, and it is uncomfortable in this state; it is most uncomfortable when the individual is actively committing sin. We call this inactive, out-of-sorts spirit "conscience", and its purpose is to remind us that we are out of fellowship with God, and urge us to re-establish fellowship .

The human spirit is not created, like the angels, nor is it self-existent, like God. It is "God-breathed". Genesis 2: 7 says that God formed Adam's body from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the "breath of life". He did not simply blow air into the lungs of that body; He breathed, expelled into it of His own spirit-substance. When that spirit-substance came in contact with the flesh, life flowed into it.

The rest of that verse says that "man became a living soul." I believe that when the spirit, the breath of God, brought life to the central nervous system of the body, a third element came of that union. The soul, which is mind, emotions, and will, is formed of the inter-action of body and spirit.

PRIDE

Pride has long been taught as the original sin. And yet, we've all been scolded, as children, to "tuck in your shirt-tail; don't you have any pride?" If God resists the proud, as the Bible says, shouldn't we all keep our shirt-tails out? Is pride a sin or not?

Pride falls into the same category as sex. Sex was designed by God to serve a variety of functions in the lives of human beings. In the proper place and perspective, sex is wonderful. It adds spice (and children) to marriage, and let's be honest; it's fun. If you take it out of its place, there is almost no sin that sex can't lead to. Sex isn't sin, but its mis-use will surely lead to sins of the most disgusting sort.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall", says Proverbs 16: 18. Pride is not sin, it goes before sin. In its place, pride will make you comb your hair or put on a clean shirt or use an anti-perspirant. Like a good servant, pride is nearly invisible when it's on the job. But when the servant interferes with the master, he is no longer a good servant; he must be put in his place.

Pride is not the original sin. It is not a sin, any more than sex is. But it can be mis-used, and then it will lead to self-idolatry. It is like a land-mark by which you can recognize that you're on the wrong road: "If you get to the truck-stop, you've missed your turn. Go back a mile, and take a left."

About The Author, in his own words:

“I was born in 1954, and spent my youth in and around Fairmount, Indiana. My professional career launched at the age of 16, when I began training as a Respiratory Therapist. I received an Associate of Arts in Christian Ministry in 1979 from World Harvest Bible College in South Bend, Indiana, now a part of Indiana Christian University. Over the past fifteen years, I have visited Scotland four times, and plan someday to reside there permanently. I married my sweet wife Roxanne in 1996. Anything else you need to know about me can be found at either my personal web site or at Aleph Branch Enterprises; both web addresses plus e-mail information can be found below.

“Outside of Fairmount, on State Road 26, there is a sign that declares Fairmount to be the home town of James Dean, *Garfield* creator Jim Davis, and CBS newsman Phil Jones. I think the sign could accomodate a fourth name, don't you?”

David L Henderson
February, 2003

Personal web page:

<http://my.netdirect.net/~cyrano>

Commercial site:

<http://www.abranch.com>
cyrano@abranch.com