



READING THE BIBLE MYSTICALLY: Fall Series

Dr. Laurence H. Kant, Historian of Religion (Ph.D., Yale University, 1993)

November 8, Sunday, 2:00-5:00 p.m.

131 Jesselin Drive, Lexington, KY 40503



Everyone comes to the Bible with different perspectives. Lay people appeal to tradition, practice, belief, social justice, evangelism, literal interpretation, and opposition or apathy to religion. Scholars interpret the Bible from their own angles: history, literature, sources, language, theology, and archaeology. No one perspective, however, can encompass and fully explain biblical texts.

For me, a mystical approach to biblical interpretation entails the discovery and creation of profound meaning in the text. Integrative in nature, it uses a variety of perspectives to understand the contexts and multiple (often ambiguous and sometimes conflicting) meanings of passages. We start from the ground up, beginning with small details (word-by-word and even letter-by-letter) as we move through sentences and stories toward apparently hidden and esoteric readings. Usually what we regard as secret or mystical lies in open sight, but seeing it demands close attention and far-reaching awareness of all sorts.

We will spend the bulk of time on Genesis 4, the story of Cain and Abel, and ponder some challenging questions: What happens to first-born children in Genesis? Why? Why did God prefer Abel's offering to Cain's? How would you describe God's treatment of Cain? Why did Cain choose to bring Abel to a field to kill him? Why did Cain kill Abel? What is murder? What do life and death mean to those who have never experienced death? What does it mean to be a wanderer? What is the mark of Cain? What does it mean that Cain and Cain's descendants built cities, played lyres and pipes, and made tools of copper and iron? Who are the descendants of Cain? Who are the descendants of Seth and Enosh? If we have time, we will also consider Genesis 5 and 6:1-4. No previous background is necessary. Mutual respect is assumed in an atmosphere open to all spiritual, religious, and non-religious points of view. Our next date for the Fall Series is Sunday, December 13, from 2-5 p.m.

The cost of the workshop is \$35.00 per person (cash, or check made out to "Mystic Scholar, LLC"), Reserve a place by emailing Dr. Kant at dbl2@qx.net (with "Mystic Scholar" in the subject line). Payment may be made at the door before the workshop. Please read Genesis 4-6:4 beforehand. For further information on the presenter, see the attached CV and bio.

*The photo in the middle of the page is of a Hebrew folio of Genesis 1 in the Leningrad Codex (the oldest complete manuscript of the Hebrew Bible), c. 1010 CE, originally from Cairo, Egypt, now in the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg.