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Note: Please remember to tag this newsletter so that it goes to your "Inbox" and not Spam or "Promotions."

It remains our plan in 2016 to publish twice per month. An archive of past issues is available [here](#). Happy New Year. This is our first issue of 2016.

In 2015 we offered you lead articles drawn from our book-in-progress, "*The Soon Second Coming of Christ*." While there is much we still want to publish in this newsletter from that project, we're going to switch gears for a while and introduce to you material from a separate book-in-progress: "*Where Satan Dwells: Antichrists Through the Ages*."

Pictured above is the Pergamum Altar, housed at the Pergamum Museum in Berlin, Germany.

Where Satan Dwells

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny

*My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, **where Satan dwells***" (Rev 2:12-13).

*"...And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. **And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him**" (Rev 12:7-9).*

"The LORD said to Satan, 'From where do you come?' Then Satan answered the LORD and said, '**From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it**' (Job 1:7).

*"Again, **the devil took him up into an exceedingly high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And said unto him, All these things will I give you, if you will fall down and worship me.** Then said Jesus unto him, Begone, Satan: for it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve" (Matthew 4:8-10).*

During the four-century gap between the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament, an ancient prophecy of Daniel was partially fulfilled. The Seleucid King Antiochus IV Epiphanes, demonically possessed by Satan himself, tried to extinguish the worship of Jehovah God by the Hebrew people in Jerusalem.

His strategy was multifaceted. He corrupted the Levite priests with flattery, led the young men into moral compromise, and defiled God's Temple with pig's blood and other unclean things. Finally, he set up the "Abomination of Desolation" on the holy altar, foreshadowing the last days Antichrist of Revelation.

One heroic man, Judah Maccabees (Judah the Hammer), led a successful revolt against Antiochus and preserved the Hebrew religion and culture.

Immediately upon the death of Antiochus, his key political ally and mentor King Eumenes II of Pergamum built the Altar of Pergamum, which is described in Revelation Chapter 2 as "Satan's Throne."

"And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells'" Revelation 2:12-13.

Satan's Throne sits today in the Pergamum Museum in the center of Berlin, Germany after it was excavated and restored in the late 1800s. It became the property of the Germans shortly before German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche began preaching the satanic mantra "God is Dead."

It's acquisition was considered by Kaiser Wilhelm II to be the highest achievement of his rule -- a regency which included (by some accounts) his surreptitious launch of World War I to divert public attention from a long series of criminal scandals at home. It was the inspiration for the design of Adolf Hitler's Nuremberg Rally Complex, the ultimate expression in architecture of his satanic megalomania that gave us World War II and the Holocaust. (And, incidentally, it was the inspiration for the design of the stage on which candidate Barack Obama accepted the Democratic nomination for President of the United States in 2008.)

Satan's Throne was owned by the Romans during the reign of its most grossly evil emperors, the Arabs

during the rise of Islam, the Germans during Third Reich, the United States during the official displacement of Christianity by Secular Humanism, the Soviet Union during its decades as the “Evil Empire,” and the European Union from its inception to the present day.

Where Satan Dwells?

Is the Biblical reference to the Altar of Pergamum as Satan’s Throne merely metaphorical, or is it literal? Did Satan actually dwell in Pergamum, or more specifically in or upon the Altar of Pergamum? Was the Altar his spiritual gateway into the material world? And if so, has it served that purpose thorough the ages, even to this very day? Is the Altar his exclusive dwelling place or have there been others?

This study posits that the center of evil in the world at any given moment in time is where Satan dwells and that this evil is manifested throughout history in the actions of a series of human rulers (or other men strategically situated to serve his interests) who fulfill the role of “Antichrist” under his direct influence -- an influence which is somehow tied to their possession of or authority over Satan’s material dwelling place. Using these assumptions we will attempt to trace the history of Satan in the world.

The list of Antichrist figures presented in this first publication is incomplete, as this will be an ongoing study, but we believe enough of the chronology is provided to confirm the hypothesis on which it is based.

Before we begin to identify the individual persons who appear to fulfill the “office” of the Antichrist through the centuries we must address a few of our presuppositions and caveats.

First, that Satan is a finite, created being with limitations defined by God (Ezekiel 28:15). Though he has great power, and an army of demonic angels at his command, he can only be in one place at a time.

Second, while Satan is the king of the demonic realm and the most wicked of all creatures, he is not the only evil entity at work in the world (Revelation 12:7-9). There are many “principalities and powers” working to deceive, degrade and enslave human beings (2 Corinthians 10:3-6). The existence of more than one wicked ruler in the same time period is not an argument against one of them being the Antichrist.

Third, while the holy angels who serve God have the power to take human form and walk unnoticed among men (Hebrews 13:2), demons, including Satan, seem to have more limited access to the physical world and must “possess” living hosts, both human and animal (Matthew 8:28-32).

Fourth, at least some demons are based in specific geographic territories. This does not seem to be true of angels. While Michael the Archangel is identified in Daniel 12:1 as “*the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people*” (by implication wherever they may be) the actual “prince of Israel” (the land) is a demon who will rule until the return of the Messiah (Ezekiel 21:25). The Bible also speaks of the “Prince of Persia” (Daniel 10:13) and of specific towns and cities named after the Baal or “lord” that presides there: for example Baal Peor, named for a demon called Chemosh, worshipped by the Moabites (Num. 25:3-5), and “Baal-zebub [the Lord of the Flies], the god of Ekron” (2 Kings 1:16).

So, from the time of the expulsion from the Garden of Eden until the brief period in which he is allowed greater freedom by God to lead the last days rebellion (Revelation 13), it would seem that Satan’s influence in the world is limited to what he can accomplish through a human host.

Since we suppose that Satan was somehow tied to the Altar of Pergamum as his dwelling place, we will also ask where, if anywhere, did Satan dwell before the Altar was built for him. We will address several

possible sites/structures in this study, including the very City of Babylon, whose very name in the original Akkadian language means "Gate of God," and which housed the Temple of Marduk (later called Baal).

Spiritual Portals

There is a theme interwoven throughout scripture of the phenomenon of specially constructed altars or other structures which serve as portals from the spiritual to the physical world.

The most important of these was, of course, the Tabernacle of God, within which is the Holy of Holies, which held the Ark of the Covenant, whose top is called The Mercy Seat. The Tabernacle had two separate altars, one for burning incense and the other for animal sacrifice. Each of these was specially constructed according to His detailed instructions (Exodus 25-31; 36-40). God's presence was intimately associated with the Tabernacle in the form of a pillar of smoke by day and of fire by night (Exodus 40:34-38). The Tabernacle was the model for the Temple of God which was constructed much later.

God also instructed His people to make altars of un-hewn stone (Exodus 20:25). Long before the time of the Exodus, Abraham built such altars to God (Genesis 12:7, 8; 13:18) and the practice continued throughout the Old Testament.

Importantly, the Lord was not in any way limited in His access to the world, but these structures and the regulations related to them somehow facilitated His interaction with His people, and served as a protection to human beings who attempted to draw near to Him. Without them, the very Holiness of His presence would destroy them (Exodus 19:21-22; 20:19; Leviticus 10:1; 2 Samuel 6:7).

In a similar but far more restricted manner, those who worship demons access the spiritual world through physical altars and other structures. There are numerous examples in scripture but perhaps the most significant involves King Ahab of Israel who built both an altar and a temple to Baal in Samaria, the capitol city of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

Ahab, of course had married Jezebel, the daughter of King Ethbaal of Zidon (1 Kings 16:31-33).

Importantly, Ashtoreth, female counterpart to Baal was "the goddess of the Zidonians" (1 Kings 11:5). Thus the marriage of Ahab and Jezebel appears in this context to be the literal union of Baal and Ashtoreth (Satan and his bride, as it were), the man Ahab being possessed by the demon Satan and the woman Jezebel by the demon called Ashtoreth.

Ahab was considered by God the most wicked of all the kings of the House of Israel (though King Manasseh of the House of Judah ran a close second -- 2 Kings 21:1-16). In contrast, King Josiah of Judah was considered the most righteous of the Hebrew monarchs of either house. 2 Kings 23 and 2 Chronicles 34 offer extensive details of Josiah's reforms, which emphasized the destruction of pagan altars and other sites and structures used to worship demons throughout Jerusalem and the surrounding hills as well as in the Temple of God. An enlightening glimpse at the spiritual defilement of the Temple is provided in Ezekiel's vision in the Book of Ezekiel, Chapter 8.

We will examine the Antichrist role of various Judean and Israelite Kings more extensively later in this study. Our purpose here is simply to identify a few demonic spiritual portals to demonstrate that there is extensive Biblical support to the idea that demons can operate in the world in association with physical objects and structures.

In the next issue we will proceed with our study of Antichrists through the ages.



Fundamentals of End-Time Prophecy

Eschatology 101A

A Certificate Program of Redemption Gate Bible College

In the Spring of 2015, I developed a 5-week class on prophecy for Redemption Gate Bible College. This newsletter will feature the material from that class over the next year as I work to refine and strengthen it for use as a correspondence course. To that end I solicit your input.

The original course featured 35 questions (seven in each class session) which were asked and answered during an interactive discussion period.

We will address one or more of those (and likely additional) questions each week in this segment of the newsletter.

Session 1: The Context for Understanding Prophecy

(Questions 7 of 7)

7. What is the “Day of the Lord?”

*“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; **To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God;** To comfort all who mourn, To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified” (Isaiah 61:1-3).*

We have previously noted that Jesus cited the above passage from Isaiah 61 at the start of His earthly ministry as recorded in Luke 4:14-21. In one simple act He 1) claimed deity, 2) proclaimed both the Jubilee year of God’s calendar (Leviticus 25) and His power as the author of the Jubilee to save and free all of mankind; and, 3) by closing the book without declaring the Day of God’s vengeance, indicated that the remainder of that prophecy would be fulfilled later, at His second coming.

The Day of the Lord’s vengeance is synonymous with the Day of Atonement as described in Revelation 19:11-16:

*“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. **Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations.** ‘He will rule them with an iron scepter.’ He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: kin of kings*

and lord of lords.”

Importantly, in Isaiah 61 the day of the Lord’s vengeance is contrasted with the “favorable year of the Lord,” but at the same time intimately linked with it, indicating a deeper meaning. The context of Isaiah 61 is clearly messianic, describing the Millennial Kingdom, the thousand-year-long “day” that corresponds both to the seventh day of creation in Genesis 1, and to the seventh day Sabbath of every week in the God’s calendar in Leviticus 23. And the “favorable year of the Lord” corresponds (thematically) both to the seventh or Sabbatical year in every Shemitah cycle, as well as the 50th or Jubilee year following every seventh Sabbatical year, which are also described in Leviticus 23 and 25. These in turn are both representative of the Millennial Kingdom (which is described in even greater detail in Isaiah 11, where mention is also made of the vengeance of God as the precursor to that “peaceable kingdom”).

In short, all of these: the seventh day of Creation, the seventh day of each week, the seventh year of each Shemitah cycle, the 50th year of each Jubilee cycle, and the Millennial Kingdom: are variations of the Sabbath, which is the Lord’s Day. It’s quite an amazing confluence of Biblical symbolism.

Let’s look at this sequence just once more through the eyes of another prophet, Joel:

*“Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand...Let the nations be roused; let them advance into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the nations on every side. Swing the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, trample the grapes, for the winepress is full and the vats overflow— so great is their wickedness!” Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon will be darkened, and the stars no longer shine. The Lord will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the heavens will tremble. But the Lord will be a refuge for his people, a stronghold for the people of Israel. **Then you will know that I, the Lord your God, dwell in Zion, my holy hill. Jerusalem will be holy; never again will foreigners invade her**” (Joel 2:1, 3:12-17).*

So again we see that the day of the Lord’s vengeance ushers in the Millennial Kingdom.

When then is “The Day of the Lord?” Our preferred answer is:

The thousand-year “day” of the Millennial Kingdom that immediately follows the 24-hour day of the Lord’s vengeance.



The Woman and the Serpent Part 2, The Woman in the Desert -- Hagar

We Christians talk about our desert experiences as those awful times when we have somehow wandered away from God and can no longer hear His voice, whether through habitual sin or dereliction of duty or some other did-not of our own. Truth to tell, though, God seems to prize desert experiences rather highly, as we could easily see if we thought about David in the wilderness (Ziph, Maon, En-Gedi,

Paran), Elijah in the wilderness (I Kings 19), John the Baptist in the wilderness, or our Lord's retreats during His days on earth:

"But so much the more went there a fame abroad of Him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. And He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed" (Luke 5:15-16).

Maybe we should be un-surprised when Hagar's two desert experiences don't turn out the way we would have expected, given God's instruction to Abraham to hand her and her son over to the whims of the outraged Sarah. But before we get ahead of ourselves, we had better lay a little groundwork for the entrance of the Woman into the desert.

When we last left her, the Woman was the outcast Eve, *Chavah*, the "mother of all living," doomed to live an unrecorded number of years, to bear sons and daughters in the sorrow that began with Cain and Abel, and to die outside her native garden, bearing an enmity for the serpent that she would pass on to her seed (Genesis 3:16). We suggested that, like Adam (the "first Adam" of I Corinthians 15:45), she becomes a "type" in God's grand narration of the interweaving of human behavior with divine plan.

Many aspects of her will be revealed by individual woman-characters in the Bible, but the pieces will come together in the Old Testament to form one (divided) image: the Wife of God, the Hebrew nation.

"For thy Maker is thine Husband; the Lord of Hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall He be called" (Isaiah 54:5).

Like Eve, her desire will be for her Husband, but it will prove to be a fickle and inconstant desire:

"The Lord said also unto me...Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? She is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot" (Jeremiah 3:6).

...and He will rule over her, but it will generally be a matter of bringing a stiff-necked people to bay.

"Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone followed the dictates of his evil heart; therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but which they have not done" (Jeremiah 11:8).

From the beginning, this epic struggle between the wife of God and her longsuffering Husband is set against a desert background, a place devoid of the comforts and hiding places of the garden, a place where the longings, the trials and the perfidies of the heart are exposed.

The whole history of the nation of Israel is embodied by a desert experience -- 40 years of it -- wandering the Sinai Peninsula on their way to the Promised Land. Its main event, the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai, resembles the ancient Jewish wedding rite in which the groom would announce himself at the bride's house (along with the wedding party and as much fanfare as he could manage) and call her out to accompany him to his house.

"Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire...and the whole mountain quaked violently. When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder"

Exodus 19:18-19.

Then God spoke all these words, saying, *"I am the Lord your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me"* (Exodus 20:1-3).

It is a fully binding rite of covenant, with God offering Himself and His law (which, though the Hebrews did not realize it, amounted to His protection – inner and outer – for the duration of their lives, and for their nation), and the people offering their obedience:

"...and all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do!"

(Exodus 24:3).

The covenant is solemnized by ritual blood sacrifice of animals and the people are sprinkled with the blood to “seal” them. In our disposable-relationship culture, we speak of people rushing off to Reno before the ink on their marriage license is dry; with the Hebrews it was the still-moist sprinkled blood, and where they headed for was Egypt. The first “adultery,” committed with an Apis-bull idol re-created out of their miserable Egyptian past, is accomplished as soon as they tire of waiting for God's messenger – a mere forty days.

"[Aaron took the people's gold jewelry] from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, and made it into a molten calf; and they said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!"

(Exodus 32:4).

In what seems like a hideous reprise of the sacrifice that had just marked God's covenant (though this time it is punishment and not sacrifice), Moses orders everyone who is for God to take a sword and cut down his kinsman, neighbor or friend (Exodus 32:26-28). 3,000 idolatrous Hebrews are killed by the Levites, who respond to Moses' challenge, and their blood soaks into the desert sand.

Eve saw her firstborn die at the hand of her second. The nation of Israel, God's “wife,” now sees a loss of life that will be the beginning of her “sorrow in bringing forth children.” All but two of the “Hebrew children” who set out on their journey of deliverance and promise in such high hopes will fall in the desert, one by one, for forty years, never to reach the Promised Land.

And there are still more of the elements of Eve's story. The people's recurring desire for food not provided by God's hand, or according to His rules (Exodus 16, Numbers 11,14, 21). Their seemingly incessant doubting of God's sovereignty or His ability to take care of them – even His favor, for that matter – despite miracles galore and deliverance after deliverance. In Numbers 21 there are even attacking serpents – fiery ones – with a decidedly supernatural flavor (the Hebrew word used here for “serpent” and “seraph” being the same); the God-ordained remedy for those bitten – looking at a bronze serpent lifted on a pole – will be compared by Christ with His own remedial act on the raised-up cross some 1500 years later (John 3:14).

Before we take up the continuing saga of the Woman in her new iteration as the Wife of God, we will turn to three specific women of the Bible who represent of the “desert experience.” They are Hagar, Hannah, and Miriam, and they will lead us down three separate paths – the physical, the emotional and the spiritual – to the God who waits for us in the desert.

Hagar – the desert of physical isolation and alienation

She is called Hagar the Egyptian. Not just Hagar. Her outsider status is hung around her neck like an ID badge. She is forever linked to Egypt: hotbed of sorcery and animal-headed gods, shape-changing serpents and god-kings, infamous place of Hebrew enslavement. Yet Hagar herself was likely sold into slavery as part of Pharaoh's sort of sweetheart deal with Abraham, an arrangement whereby Pharaoh

took Sarah into his harem, since Abraham claimed she was only his sister (Genesis 12:10-20). Though the deception was brought to Pharaoh's attention by God (through great plagues or infections), the ruler ended up letting Abraham take all his many acquisitions with him when he was sent packing, and these presumably included Hagar the Egyptian. Hebrew tradition tells us that she was a princess, and she is indeed given an honorable position as Sarah's handmaid, with an apparently high level of trust that we see when Sarah, many years barren and uncertain about God's promise of a son, sends her off to Abraham's bed as a means of bringing that promise to (surrogate) life.

But Hagar, once pregnant, can't resist pressing her advantage as the sole child-bearing wife (this is the term Genesis 12 uses for her, even though she retains her status as Sarah's maid), and proceeds to "despise" Sarah, a woman already smarting from decades of shame for her childlessness. Sarah gets blanket permission from Abraham to do whatever she wants about Hagar. What she wants, as it turns out, is to make Hagar's life miserable, so miserable, in fact, that Hagar runs away...into the desert.

The next we hear of Hagar, she is "found" next to a desert spring by an angel...but not just any angel. This happens to be malach Adonai, the Angel of the Lord, who is named 50 times in the Old Testament and nine in the New Testament, and who seems to merge with the persons of the Trinity in speech and power. He challenges Hagar, now surely far from any life support except her spring:

"Hagar, Sarah's maid, where have you come from and where are you going?" (Genesis 16:8a).

A form of challenge we have heard before, but only from the mouth of God (to Adam in Genesis 3:6 – *"Where are you?"* and to Cain in Genesis 4:8 - *"Where is your brother?"*). The question is clearly rhetorical, since the Angel knows exactly where Hagar has come from, as well as the fact that she is pregnant and the gender and future life details of her child and the number of her descendants.

Probably even Hagar does not know where she is going (she doesn't answer Part B of the question) and the Angel has come to supply that detail. She is to go back and submit herself to Sarah, and then he, personally (and here we begin to suspect that he's no angel!), guarantees that she will be the mother of descendants too numerous to count. Of course, there's a catch. Her son, whom she must name Ishmael ("God hears"), is going to act like a wild donkey and will never get along with anybody.

Through Hagar God has set up the permanent and rabid enemies of the Hebrews, the Arab peoples who count themselves "sons of Ismail" and who embrace the faith of Islam with its inbuilt despising of Jews – just as Hagar once despised Sarah and her son later scorned Sarah's son Isaac.

So why does this mysterious being, who alternately refers to God in the third person and as "I," show up in person to talk with the Gentile Hagar and let her in on the future of the Middle East? He tells her exactly why before he goes into the sordid details of her child's future: *"the Lord has given heed to ('heard') your affliction"* (v. 6). She is an outcast of outcasts, sitting on a rock somewhere out in the desert, and but for the intervention of this miraculous being, she is out of luck. In this most comfortless and barren of places, Hagar sees the collapse of her self-reliance. And the strange thing is, she is not dumbfounded or terror-struck by this angel, like just about everybody else who meets one. She answers him straightforwardly and then, having heard his prophecy, glorifies him as the Living One Who Sees Me (she names the spring after Him), wondering how she is even alive after seeing Him. No question about His identity to Hagar – her physical destitution and isolation made her ready to recognize Him instantly. And it was through physical means that God had meaning for her: He heard her affliction, He was the Living One (not like the stone gods of Egypt) who saw her.

But the fruit of Hagar's physical experience of God's power and presence is small, as we see in the replay of her desert exile in Genesis 21 (v. 9-17). This time it is the 14-year-old Ishmael who causes the trouble (starting early) that lands both him and his mother in the desert, once more friendless and, after a while, water-less. At this point Hagar has given up on God's promise to give her "descendants too

numerous to count.” She leaves Ishmael protesting loudly under a bush, goes off to a spot where she won't see him die and bewails their fast-approaching deaths. And once again, the Angel (this time speaking from heaven) interrupts her despair with a question, but now it is more like a rebuke: “*What, Hagar?!*” The Angel points out that this time it is the boy's cries that have been heard, and that it is he who will become a great nation. Can it be that the blessing earlier bestowed on Hagar has somehow passed to Ishmael? The passage goes on to tell us that God was with him in his growing years.

Although the prophecy foretold conflict and enmity for Ishmael's future (and we know how that played out for his numerous descendants), the Bible tells us nothing of it in his lifetime. We just hear about him joining his brother Isaac to bury their father at his death, and later about Isaac's son Esau marrying one of Ishmael's daughters.

But we are given two more significant bits of information about his mother. In the last desert episode, she does not come to the spring on her own; the Angel has to “open her eyes” before she sees it, nor is there any record of her praising God for her deliverance or naming the life-giving water. Then we are told that she takes a wife for her son from Egypt, her homeland, a kind of final gesture of return to her roots. Our last glimpse of her in the Old Testament is, after all, as Hagar the Egyptian (Genesis 25:12), and when we meet her in the New Testament, it will be as the slave woman once again.

In the apostle Paul's marvelous allegorical insert into his letter scolding the Galatians for putting themselves under the Judaizers (Jewish Christians who insisted that all Christians should follow the letter of the Mosaic law), Paul opens our eyes to the mystical significance of Hagar and her descendants:

"For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the free-woman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar -- for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children -- but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, 'Rejoice, O barren, you who do not bear! Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children than she who has a husband.' Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise" (Galatians 4:22-28).

We get the point about the slave-woman and her children representing the Mosaic law and its contemporary, gospel-rejecting legal sticklers, and Sarah and her descendants fulfilling the promise made to Abraham of a “seed” Who would bring the blessing of freedom from “earned salvation” through the law. But...there are some unexplained things going on here. For example, why is Allegorical Hagar made to represent the Jews at all, since her historical place in the Bible is as the mother of the Arab/Muslim nations? And why does Paul suddenly bring in the scripture from Isaiah 54 about the “desolate,” or husband-less barren woman and the (presumably non-barren) married woman?

The women in his historical/allegorical comparison, Sarah and Hagar, just don't line up with the Isaiah 54 women. Both of them are married (remember Hagar was called “wife”). Both are to have numberless descendants. Unless, that is, you consider the marriage-loaded biblical references to both Israel and the Church. Israel, as we mentioned earlier, held the mystical status of Wife of God (partially divorced after the first exile), whereas the Church is described throughout the New Testament as a bride or a betrothed. What kind of bride has more children than a married woman (we're not talking about brides in modern Western society)? A Bride – the Church - who must bear all her children in this world before her Husband – Christ - comes to take her them to the next. And this helps to explain why Paul makes Hagar the physical city of Jerusalem and Sarah, the “Jerusalem above.” Paul's words foreshadow the “new Jerusalem” which comes “*down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband*” in Revelation 21, and is presented as “*the bride, the wife of the Lamb.*”

As for the lack of fit between Historical Hagar and Allegorical Hagar, it becomes unimportant when you realize that the thing that unifies them is their slave status. Slavery is not only their heritage, but their present condition, seeing as they have not got freedom, says Paul, the freedom that you only get by believing in Christ. And this makes the quote from the angry Sarah that he throws into his argument a little less harsh, though he directs it at his unbelieving fellow-Jews.

"Cast out the slave woman and her son; for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.' So, brothers, we are not children of the slave, but of the free woman" (Galatians 4:30-31).

These "*children of the slave*" could be unbelieving Jews, Arabs, Luxembourgiens, Uighurs, or, sad to say, unbelieving "Christians."

Jews and Arabs. Unbelievers and believers. Slave women and free women. All of this dualism will continue to play out in the story of the Woman. In fact you can't really pick up a Bible without running into some form of the great theme of Two.

For things on earth there are "heavenly" or spiritual counterparts. The understanding of earthly things is supposed to help us penetrate the mysteries of the spiritual things. As Jesus said over and over, we are supposed to have ears that hear and eyes that see things of eternal significance, and not just sounds and sights. This is where Hagar and many Jews of Paul's day stumbled. Hagar needed the sounds and sights, the physical apparition of her God in the desert. Without them, she lost sight of the promise, and sank into the quicksands of despair. The Judaizers wanted the well-worn groove of the ritual law, and its cause-and-effect relationship with God's favor. If they got the Promise, it would have to be as a side order.

The lesson of Hagar is this. If God puts you out in the desert, sit awhile. Look for the well, listen for the angel. They may not be what you expected. And above all, don't go running back to Egypt.

Next: The Woman in the Desert (continued) – Hannah and the Two Wives

Anne Lively

A Few Housekeeping Items

I am pretty-much a one-man show and run two highly active ministry organizations. Because I maximize my time to achieve the greatest impact possible for the Kingdom of God, I value straight-to-the-point resources and communications. If you desire to communicate with me on any matter including this newsletter please be as concise as possible and please use email, not the telephone, even if you have my phone number (except in emergencies).

You may reach me at scottlivelyministries@gmail.com

Donations

I have always followed a policy of providing my writings and other self-created resources without charge whenever possible. However, my support, and that of both of the ministry organizations I run, rely upon donations to operate. For all matters related to my prophecy studies and writings donations should be sent to Redemption Gate Mission Society, PO Box 2373, Springfield, MA 01101 or online [here](#). If you want your donation to be designated for any specific purpose, just send me a note or an email to say so,

otherwise it will be used where most needed.

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