

CHAPTER 4. THE 4TH INSTALLMENT IN THE SERIES.

THE DYNASTY OF DARKNESS

SATAN'S LONG SERPENTINE TRAIL THROUGH HUMAN HISTORY IN THE ROLE OF SUCCESSIVE ANTICHRISTS, AND THE IMMINENT RISE OF HIS LAST-DAYS KINGDOM

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CHAPTER FOUR:

THE ANTICHRISTS OF CANAAN

In this chapter we will identify and address the Antichrist figures associated with the land and/or religion of Canaan, from the conquest of the land of Canaan to the rise of the Hebrew empire.

THE MOABITE KING BALAK

Following the exodus from Egypt, the first Antichrist figure we see is King Balak of Moab, east of the Jordan river which the Hebrew armies had yet to cross into Canaan proper. Although not Canaanite by blood, the Moabites had been subjugated by the Canaanites (Numbers 21:26-29) and worshipped Canaanite demons: *“Woe to you, O Moab! You are ruined, O people of Chemosh! He has given his sons as fugitives, And his daughters into captivity, To an Amorite king, Sihon”* (v.29).

We have noted that God explained to Abraham in a dream that his descendants would not receive the right of possession of the Holy Land until the “fullness” of the iniquity of the occupying Amorites (Canaanites) had been accomplished (Genesis 15:16). The iniquity of the Amorites involved ritualistic human sacrifice and sexual perversion, specifically incest, homosexuality and bestiality (Leviticus 18:1-30). This was the vile religion of the Canaanite family of nations established by Canaan, grandson of Noah.

Canaan, the man, might have been the Antichrist who preceded his nephew Nimrod in that role. We don't have enough information to form a firm conclusion, though it is highly significant that when he was banished from Noah's presence, Canaan chose to colonize and name after himself what would later be known as the Holy Land. This writer shares the belief of some that this land (in its antediluvian form) was the site of the Land of Eden, with Jerusalem the site of the Garden of Eden. In any case, the territory is unarguably special and precious to God and it is highly significant that Canaan would appropriate it as the site of the worship of demons.

The reign of King Balak of Moab corresponds to the time when the iniquity of the Amorites had reached its fullness. The Moabites were not descendants of Canaan, but of Lot by incest with his daughters, as were the Ammonites (Genesis 19:36-39). As such they were especially susceptible to Canaanite religion and became “Amorites” as it were in religious practice.

King Balak appears to be the Antichrist in the generation after the Hebrew exodus from Egypt. Numbers 22-24 recounts how Balak famously (and unsuccessfully) hired Balaam the magician to curse

the Israelites, and in Numbers 25: 1-3, finally succeeded in weakening the Hebrews by sending Moabite maidens to seduce the Hebrew men into sexual sin and the worship of Chemosh, the abomination of the Moabites (who may have been Satan himself).

“While Israel remained at Shittim, the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab. For they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel joined themselves to Baal of Peor, and the LORD was angry against Israel” (Numbers 25:1-3).

We are assuming that Baal Peor is identical to Chemosh, the demon identified as “*the abomination of the Moabites*” in 1 Kings 11:7. He is listed there along with Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and Molech and Milcom the abominations of the Ammonites, as the demons worshipped in Jerusalem under King Solomon. It is possible that Chemosh, Milcom and Molech are simply different names for Satan by different Canaanite tribes or nations. Ashtoreth, as we have previously noted is the demon “bride of Satan” synonymous with Ishtar of Babylon.

Importantly, these demons were worshipped at specially constructed altars, which, in our theory, serve as demonic spiritual portals or dwelling places.

THE THREAT OF “FOREIGN WIVES”

In the matter of Baal-Peor, and later regarding King Solomon’s fall into sin, the instrument of Satan to corrupt the Hebrews was sexual seduction by “*foreign wives*.” While it is commonly believed that all intermarriage of Hebrews with non-Hebrews was forbidden, the Bible identifies only two groups who were subject to the ban: Canaanites and “*mamzers*.”

The Canaanite intermarriage ban is stated in Deuteronomy 7:1-3 and limited to seven Canaanite nations: “*the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites...you shall utterly destroy them...you shall not intermarry with them.*”

A *mamzer* is a person born of adultery by a married Jewish woman and a Jewish man who is not her husband, or born of incest or someone who has a *mamzer* as a parent (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mamzer>). Hebrews were forbidden to marry a *mamzer*.

Because they came into being through the incest of Lot and his daughters, both the Ammonites and Moabites were *mamzers* and thus prohibited from inclusion in the Assembly of Israel (the pool of marriageable potential partners) for ten generations (i.e. forever, according to rabbinical interpretation). This is in contrast, for example, to Edomites and Egyptians who were only banned for three generations (Deuteronomy 23:1-8).

In Ezra and Nehemiah we see the reinstatement of the intermarriage ban among the exiles who had returned to Israel from Babylon. The foreign wives that Nehemiah forced the returning exiles to put

away in Nehemiah 13:23 were from the *mamzer* nations of Moab and Ammon, and from Ashdod where Canaanite refugees of the purging of the land by the Israelites (Joshua 11:22) had intermarried with Philistines (Zechariah 9:6).

One purpose of the Book of Ruth is to reveal the power of Christ, the Kinsman-Redeemer (represented by Boaz), to redeem the *mamzerim* (represented by Ruth the Moabite). King David (and by extension Christ Himself) would have been a *mamzer* if not for the redemption of his great-grandmother Ruth. Also in the line of Christ was Boaz's mother Rahab, a Amorite (Canaanite) presumably redeemed by having become a Hebrew prosthelyte (Joshua 2; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25).

What is most important to our study from this short digression is that the threat to the Hebrews from "*foreign wives*" was not primarily racial but religious and cultural, related to the ritual demon worship and corrupt sexual practices common to the specific nations subject to the intermarriage ban. "*Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods*" (Deuteronomy 7:3-4).

RIGHTEOUSNESS UNDER JOSHUA SUPPRESSED THE DEMONS

Under the war-time reign of Joshua, with the Ark of the Covenant going before them, the Hebrews took possession of most of the land of Canaan. This included the territory under the influence of the Temple of Baal in Baal-Gad in what is now Lebanon (Joshua 11:17). None of the demons could resist them because the Lord was present with them and fought for them. Their only failures occurred when they disobeyed the Lord. But they did not fully drive out the Canaanites, which failure allowed the demons to remain among them.

At the end of his life, Joshua warned the people: "*Do not associate with these nations that remain among you; do not invoke the names of their gods or... bow down to them... if you intermarry with them and associate with them, then you may be sure that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations before you. Instead, they will become snares and traps for you, whips on your backs and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land*" (Joshua 23:7-13). The people vowed not to intermarry with them in a ceremony at Shechem where Abraham had built his first altar to the Lord (Joshua 24:24-26; Genesis 12:7) and they continued to prosper for a number of years. However:

*"After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord and served the Baals. They forsook the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshipped various gods of the peoples around them. **They aroused the Lord's anger because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths**" (Judges 2:10-13)... *The Israelites lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. **They took their daughters in marriage and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods*** (Judges 3:5-6).*

The Book of Judges describes the spiritual warfare that ensued as a series of wicked rulers (who may or may not have been Antichrists) arose each time the Hebrews succumbed to demonic worship, only to be defeated when God would raise a deliverer in response to the sincere repentance of the people.

King Cushan-Rishathaim appears to be the first of these possible Antichrists, defeated by the deliverer Othniel: “*The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord; they forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs. The anger of the Lord burned against Israel so that he sold them into the hands of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram Naharaim, to whom the Israelites were subject for eight years. But when they cried out to the Lord, he raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel*” (Judges 3:7-9).

King Elgon of Moab: “*Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and...the Lord gave Eglon king of Moab power over Israel for eighteen years. Again the Israelites cried out to the Lord, and he gave them a deliverer—Ehud* (Judges 3:12-15).

King Jabin of Canaan: “*Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, now that Ehud was dead. So the Lord sold them into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan, who...cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to the Lord for help*” (Judges 4:1-3). Deborah led the overthrow of Jabin, though she is not called a deliverer.

King Zebah or Zalmunna of Midian: “*The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites...When the Israelites cried out to the Lord because of Midian... [he said] I delivered you from the hand of all your oppressors...I said to you, ‘I am the Lord your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.’ But you have not listened to me*” (Judges 6:1-10).

Gideon was the deliverer this time, but the people had degenerated far into idolatry and sexual degeneracy. Gideon’s own father had built the town altar to Baal and erected an Asherah pole. Gideon followed God’s instruction to “*Take the second bull from your father’s herd, the one seven years old. Tear down your father’s altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it. Then build a proper kind of altar to the Lord your God on the top of this height. Using the wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second bull as a burnt offering*”(Judges 6:25-26).

Before “Gideon’s 300” could win the physical battles with the Midianites, Gideon first fought and won the spiritual battle, earning the name Jerub-Baal (“Fights with Baal,” Judges 6:32).

At the end of the physical battles, “*Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescent ornaments that were on their camels’ necks*” (Judges 8:21). These crescent ornaments were idols associated with Bel (Baal) and are mentioned by Isaiah in a prophecy about Babylon: “*Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle*” (Isaiah 46:1). These scriptures support the argument that in Islam, Allah is confused with Baal, since the crescent is the symbol of that religion.

KING ABIMELECH, THE FIRST HEBREW ANTICHRIST

*“As soon as Gideon was dead, **the sons of Israel again played the harlot with the Baals, and made Baal-berith their god.** Thus the sons of Israel did not remember the LORD their God, who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side; nor did they show kindness to the household of Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) in accord with all the good that he had done to Israel”* (Joshua 8:33-35). According to some rabbinical sources, the god Baal-berith was depicted as an obscene article of idolatrous worship, possibly a *simulacrum priapi* [statue of an erect penis] (Yer. Shab. ix. 11d; 'Ab. Zarah iii. 43a).

Abimelech, one of the seventy sons of Gideon, was an exceedingly wicked man in a society that was now extremely corrupt. He persuaded the demon-worshippers of Shechem (still a Canaanite city at this time) to back him in a political coup to become sole ruler by killing all of his brothers. In response *“**They gave him seventy pieces of silver from the house of Baal-berith** with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless fellows, and they followed him. Then he went to his father’s house at Ophrah and killed his brothers the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, on one stone [though the youngest escaped]... [then] All the men of Shechem and all Beth-millo assembled together, and they went and made Abimelech king, by the oak of the pillar which was in Shechem”* (Judges 9:1-6).

When later the leaders of Shechem turned against him, Abimelech burned them alive (“*about a thousand men and women*”) in the Tower of Shechem. But, reminiscent of the prophecy against Satan in Genesis 3:15, his skull was crushed in the process by a millstone dropped on him from the tower by a woman (Judges 9:46-53).

Importantly, God did not provide a deliverer in the time of Abimelech but punished Abimelech by His own hand (Judges 9:56). And the next time that the people turned again to demon worship (Judges 10:6-8), God responded by saying “...*you have forsaken Me and served other gods; therefore I will no longer deliver you. Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your distress*” (v. 13).

The next judge of significance, Jephthah the Gileadite (the ninth judge) was not identified in scripture as a righteous man, but only a military victor and from that time onward the unity of the Hebrew tribes was broken and there was much fighting among them (e.g., Judges 12 & 19-20).

Following Samson, whom we will address in the next section, respect for the things of God and for Hebrew leadership continued to diminish. Starting with Judges 17: 6, through to the rise of the Hebrew monarchy, it began to be said that *“In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes.”*

THE PHILISTINES

“Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, so that the LORD gave them into the hands of the Philistines forty years” (Judges 13:1).

After the death of Abimelech, the chief antagonists of the Israelites were the Philistines. Though not Canaanites by blood, the territory they occupied *“was counted as Canaanite though held by the five Philistine rulers in Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath and Ekron”* (Joshua 13:3).

There is no identifiable Antichrist figure during the forty years of Judges 13:1, however, God appointed a deliverer in Samson, who was anointed from before birth for the role of punishing the Philistines for their oppression of the Hebrews.

The fact that there was no Antichrist immediately following Abimelech is interesting and seems to fit a pattern. After the defeat of an Antichrist by God’s hand (as opposed to natural death or human agent) there seems to be a considerable lapse of time before Satan re-emerges in a new host, though his agenda proceeds through the work of his demonic underlings. This was the case following the death of King Bera of Sodom (Genesis 19:24-25), and the Pharaoh of the Exodus (Exodus 14:28), both of whom were killed by God’s hand.

Although we cannot identify a Philistine Antichrist during the time of the judges, one obvious and highly significant Antichrist figure of the Bible was a Philistine who emerged later, during the time of the Hebrew kings. He was, of course, the warrior Goliath, whom we will address in the next chapter.