

Connection Between Satan and the Waters of Marah

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At first sight it seems incongruous that God would bring the nation of Israel out of Egyptian slavery only to have them drink bitter water. However upon closer examination, and comparison with other scriptures, valuable spiritual lessons should come to light.

Now when they (ancient Israel) came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter... (Ex.15:23; Ed. note in parenthesis; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

It is no coincidence that bitterness was the first thing that Israel experienced shortly after leaving Egyptian slavery. They were being reminded again, through these bitter waters, that God was the One who delivered them from bitter slavery. In reality, they were set free from the bondage of a pagan religious system that was opposed to God's law and commandments (Rom. 6:18).

And they (the Egyptians) **made their lives bitter with hard bondage** – in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they **made them serve** was **with rigor** (Ex.1:14; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

It is important at this point to mention that "water" and "waters" is often used in scripture to describe spiritual realities. Specifically, the action of God's spirit.

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he

would have given you **living water**" (Jn. 4:10; emphasis added).

But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst again. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of **water springing up into everlasting life** (Jn. 4:14; emphasis added).

On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in me (in what Christ taught; cf. Lk. 9:35), as the Scripture has said, **out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.**" ³⁹ **But this he spoke concerning the Spirit**, which those believing in him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified (Jn. 7:37-39; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

So the water that Christ described was symbolic of God's Spirit, which is not associated with bitterness as the next scripture confirms.

So he (Moses) cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree; and when he cast it into the waters, **the waters were made sweet**... (Ex. 15:25a; emphasis added).

The connection between the tree, and the waters becoming sweet, is also symbolic. As Christ mentioned in John 4:14, God's Spirit is the means through which a repentant individual can inherit everlasting life. Because of sin, Adam and Eve lost direct access to the tree of life (Gen. 3:22), which represented an essential aspect of receiving God's Holy Spirit as the next scripture confirms.

Jesus said to him (Thomas), "I am the way, the truth, **and the life** (everlasting). No one comes to the Father except through me (through

Christ's shed blood; cf. Heb. 9:22) (Jn. 14:6; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

In order to have access to sweet waters, that represent God's Spirit, it was essential for the tree that represented Christ to be cut down and tossed into the bitter waters. This pictured the complete transformation from bitterness to sweetness, spiritually speaking. In other words, Christ's sacrifice made it possible for every repentant individual to be transformed by God's Holy Spirit, which is the prerequisite to receiving everlasting life.

But if the Spirit of Him (Almighty God) who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit which dwells in you (Rom. 8:11; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Whoever is not in the process of being transformed by God's Holy Spirit, is drinking bitter waters. These bitter waters represent the actions and values of a spirit-being who is against the will of Almighty God. This individual has polluted the waters of at least a third of the angels, along with the majority of mankind. Imbibing of these waters leads to everlasting death (Rom. 6:23a).

...And a great **star (symbol of an angel;** cf. Rev. 1:20) fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. ¹¹ and the name of the star is Wormwood (bitter); and **a third of the waters became wormwood;** and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter (Rev. 8:10-11; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added; *see studies:* "The Seas and Those Who Dwell in Them" and "Sheep, Fish, Grass, Flowers and Water").

His (Satan's) **tail** (symbolic of **lies;** cf. Isa. 9:15) drew **a third of the stars (angels) of heaven** and threw them to the earth... (Rev. 12:4a; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and **his angels were cast out with him** (Rev. 12:9; emphasis added; emphasis added).

As the bitter waters of Marah could not be consumed without serious risks to Israel's health and life; so the consumption of Satan's "bitter waters" results in serious consequences for the spiritual health and life of everyone who takes in his values.

And you he (Christ) made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins (a result of drinking Satan's values), ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, **the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience** (Eph. 2:1-1; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Turning away from obedience to God is connected with wormwood, or bitterness.

So that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, **whose heart turns away from the Lord our God,** to go and serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you **a root bearing bitterness or wormwood** (Dt. 29:18; emphasis added).

It is even possible for someone who has God's Holy Spirit to turn away from obedience at some point in their life. If this occurs, they are in danger of quenching God's Spirit unless they repent.

Do not quench the Spirit (1Thes. 5:19).

As the next scripture confirms, the actions of anyone who harbors a bitter attitude not only places them in danger of quenching God's Holy Spirit, they can also affect others negatively.

Looking diligently lest anyone fall short of the grace (forgiveness) of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, **and by this many become defiled** (Heb. 12:15; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

This appears to be the case with Satan. His bitter attitude and evil influence ended up affecting a third of the angels resulting in their rebellion against Almighty God, which then placed them under the death penalty (Rom. 6:23). The next scripture confirms they are now waiting for the judgment that will occur at the time of the second resurrection, which is described as "the great day".

And the angels who did not keep their proper domain (as a result of sin), but left their own habitation, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the **judgment of the great day** (Jude 6; cf. Rev. 20:11-15; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Because the majority of ancient Israel persisted in following Satan's values, instead of God's, they are reserved for the same judgment of the second resurrection (Rev. 20:5-6). Had they understood what the bitter waters of Marah represented, they may have attempted to obey God's word, but they didn't.

...There (at Marah) He made a statute and an ordinance (regulation) for them. And there He tested them,²⁶ and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For **I am the Lord who heals you.**"

(Ex. 15:25b-26; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

The diseases mentioned in the scripture above are consequences for living contrary to God's will. Ultimately, they are spiritual in nature, and every sinner needs to be healed of the sins they have committed in order to live forever. Again, it is only through the actions of the tree that was "struck down" and tossed into the bitter waters that this healing can begin.

Surely he (Christ) has borne our griefs (sicknesses) and carried our sorrows (pains associated with living a sinful life); yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten (**struck down**) by God, and afflicted.⁵ But he was wounded (pierced through) for our transgressions, he was bruised (crushed) for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon him, and **by his stripes** (blows that cut in) **we are healed.**⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; **we have turned, every one, to his own way;** and (therefore) the Lord has laid on him (Christ) the iniquity of us all (Isa. 53:4-6; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Mankind has been brought up on bitter waters and accepts them as normal. It is only when the consequences of drinking them, over a prolonged period of time, become apparent that any change of attitude can possibly occur. This "awakening" will happen in the future as the following prophecy confirms.

Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah – ³² not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord (2Cor. 11:2).³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the

house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people (Jer. 31:31-33; Ed. note in parenthesis).

It is important to note that every repentant sinner is grafted into the spiritual nation of Israel regardless of race, gender, or societal position.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28).



THEY GAVE HIM SOUR WINE MINGLED WITH GALL (WORMWOOD; BITTERNESS) TO DRINK. BUT WHEN HE TASTED IT, HE WOULD NOT DRINK.

Matthew 27:34; Ed. note in parenthesis

The apostle Paul confirmed that anyone could be grafted into the spiritual family of Israel upon repentance of sin.

And if some of the branches (representing the physical nation of Israel) were broken off, and you (Gentiles), being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness (richness) of the olive tree, ¹⁸ do not boast against the branches (as in judging them). But if you boast, remember that you do not support the root (representing Christ), but the root supports you (Rom. 11:17-128; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Thankfully, Christ will make a "perfect finish" of the work his Father has given him, and this will include everyone having the opportunity to willingly repent of the sins they have committed.

Looking unto Jesus, the author (originator) and finisher (perfecter) of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross (Gr,

stauros; wooden stake or pole), despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb, 12:2; Ed. notes in parentheses).

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, **not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance** (2Pet. 3:9; emphasis added).

The last attempt by Satan to make Christ drink "wormwood" occurred just before he died on the stake, but Christ refused to consume it.

They gave him sour wine mingled with gall (wormwood; bitterness) to drink. But when he had tasted it, he would not drink (Mt. 27:34; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Anyone who persists in drinking the wormwood of Satan's values will be excluded from everlasting life.

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortionists will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed (symbolically, by the sweet waters provided through Christ's shed blood), but you were sanctified (set apart), but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God (the Father) (1Cor. 6:9-11; Ed. notes in parentheses; cf. Rev. 22:15).

The last time Satan will be able to make individuals, in both the physical and spiritual realms, drink of his bitter waters will be at the end of Christ's millennial rule on this planet (Rev. 20:7-10). The good news is that these bitter waters will never occur again, and following this

incident everyone who previously partook of these bitter waters will be given an opportunity to repent and be restored in their relationship with Almighty God.

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