

THE END SEEN FROM THE BEGINNING

Lessons from 4,000 Years ago, Unheeded today

By Arlen L. Chitwood

“Now Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing. I pray thee, go in unto my maid: it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai” (Gen. 16:1, 2).

“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,

Declaring the end from the beginning; and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure” (Isa. 46:9, 10).

God sees the end from the beginning, and He has structured His Word in this manner, not only at the beginning but numerous places throughout.

Both Testaments begin *exactly the same way*, with John’s gospel occupying its proper place beginning the New Testament — “In [the] beginning God...” (Gen. 1:1a); “In [the] beginning was the Word...” (John 1:1a).

As well, each book beginning each Testament relates *the complete story* — *from the beginning to the end* — in the opening two chapters of each, relating *exactly the same story, though from different perspectives* (Gen. 1:1-2:3; John 1:1-2:11).

Then, the remainder of each book, providing commentary for the beginning of each book, as well, relates *the same story, told two different ways* (“types” in

Genesis, “signs” in John [cf. Heb. 1:1, 2]). And beyond this, throughout each book, there are numerous beginning points which take matters to the same end.

The preceding is simply the manner in which God has structured His Word throughout.

The remainder of this article, seeing God reveal the end from the beginning, has to do with 4,000 years of human history, with the seed of Abraham at the beginning point (the birth of Ishmael and Isaac) and the seed of Abraham today (the descendants of Ishmael and Isaac 4,000 years later),

And, as will be shown concerning the matter, God reveals the end from the beginning (revealed during Abraham’s day at the time of and following the birth of both Ishmael and Isaac).

Then, as will also be shown, man, relative to the whole of the matter, too often does two things:

- 1) Fails to learn from history, repeating the same mistakes.
- 2) And, if he can foul things up, he probably will.

God’s Way, Man’s Way

God has an affinity for *ALWAYS doing things a particular way*. God uses unchanging patterns which He Himself established. He uses numbers, metaphors, types, signs, parables, etc. And the manner in which He uses each is not only consistent but fraught with significance and meaning, with each just as much a part of God’s revealed Word as any other part of the Word, revealed after any fashion.

Then, God’s complete word picture of that which He has revealed to man concerning His plans and purposes can be seen *ONLY ONE WAY*. This complete picture, exactly as God gave it, can be seen *ONLY through taking all the different parts which God gave at different times and ways and putting all of them together in a proper manner, in exact keeping with how God has structured His Word*.

Now, with the preceding in mind, note the previously referenced account in the Word pertaining to Abraham and his seed.

Four thousand years ago God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, making certain promises to him concerning a seed and a land. Abraham was to have an offspring, and through this individual God would bring forth a nation which would be established in the land to which Abraham has been called, the land of Canaan. And through this nation all the other nations of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:1-3).

Once in the land to which He had been called, following a trip to Egypt and then back to the land, the years began to pass without God fulfilling His promise concerning a seed. Throughout this time, ten years in the land, *Sarah remained barren* (Gen. 16:1-3).

Sarah, realizing her apparent inability to bear children, approached Abraham with a plan to help God fulfill His promise concerning Abraham having a seed to continue his lineage. Abraham, with Sarah’s blessing, would go in unto Sarah’s Egyptian handmaid (possibly previously acquired while in Egypt), have a child by Hagar, and God’s promises could then be fulfilled through this child. And this is what Abraham did, resulting in the birth of *Ishmael*.

Abraham was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born, and this is followed by thirteen silent years in Scripture (Gen. 16:16-17:1).

Then, when Abraham was ninety-nine years old, God reappeared to him and revealed that the time had arrived for His promise from years earlier to be fulfilled.

God revealed to Abraham that about this time during the following year Sarah would bear him a son, whose name was to be called “Isaac.” And all which God had previously promised to Abraham would be fulfilled through this son.

Then, beyond that, this would be a miraculous birth. Sarah was beyond the age of childbearing. Everything about this birth would be of the Lord’s doings, not man’s (Gen. 17:1ff; 18:1ff; 21:1ff).

But the birth of Isaac, though fulfilling God’s promise concerning a seed, was far from the end of the matter. Fifteen years earlier Abraham and Sarah had tried to help God fulfill His promise by

turning to Egypt for help (to Hagar, an Egyptian). And Scripture is quite clear about those who go down to Egypt for help (Isa. 31:1), a statement which could only be intensified in Abraham and Sarah's case, for *they were trying to help God fulfill His promise through that of Egyptian origin, i.e., through that of the world* (cf. I Sam. 15:9-28).

And the preceding is the clear reason why today, 4,000 years later, *the Middle East is aflame*. The descendants of Abraham, the Jewish people, have done *exactly the same thing* that Abraham and Sarah did by going to Hagar. And the descendants of Abraham through Hagar — the Ishmaelites — not only fill the Middle East today but are the bitter enemies of the descendants of Isaac.

In one respect, it is the continuing story of Abraham's tent, with its occupants. There was evidently peace in the tent as long as Ishmael was in the tent alone, for fourteen years. But once Isaac was born, *the trouble began; and it has continued, unabated, for 4,000 years* (Gen. 21:1ff). The descendants of Ishmael and the descendants of Isaac, during Man's Day, *simply CANNOT peacefully co-exist together*.

Nor are they supposed to do so. God's promises to Abraham are in view, and the son of the bondwoman has no part with the son of the freewoman in these promises. Rather, *he is to be cast out* (Gen. 21:8-12), though this awaits God taking care of matters at the time of His Son's return.

The Continuing Problem

In the meantime, the problem continues, with no one being able to do anything about it (Hos. 5:13, 14). But to foster the problem, *a corresponding and an inseparable problem exists; and, this problem, as previously stated, is one paralleling Abraham and Sarah going to Hagar, causing the problem*.

As Abraham and Sarah sought to help God fulfill His promise concerning a seed, the descendants of Abraham, in modern times, *relative to God's promises concerning the Jewish people and the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, have done **EXACTLY THE SAME THING**. They have taken

it upon themselves to help God fulfill His promises, and they have done this through the arm of flesh, which is going to Egypt for help.

And, beyond the preceding, over the intervening years, *the Jewish people have done this with the blessing and help of numerous Christian leaders — who have misled the masses — believing and teaching, COMPLETELY CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE, that this is a work of God*.

World War II, with 6,000,000 Jews slain through the Third Reich's attempt to produce a Jew-free Europe, produced the catalyst for that which occurred three years later — the existence, after almost 2,000 years in the diaspora, of a recognized Jewish State in the land of Israel (the Nation of Israel today).

The nation was small at first, but over almost seven decades since that time, Jewish people from all nations have streamed into Israel. And today some 6,000,000 Jews, about two-fifths of the world's Jewish population, dwell in that land.

So, what can possibly be wrong with the preceding, and how can this be likened to Abraham and Sarah trying to help God fulfill His promise concerning a seed?

The answer is very simple. God drove the Jewish people out among the nations *to effect repentance through Gentile persecution*. And God has promised that *He would one day regather His people back to a healed land, with the promises in the Abrahamic Covenant being fulfilled*.

But this would occur ONLY AFTER His purpose for driving His people out among the nations had been fulfilled. This would occur ONLY FOLLOWING repentance on the part of the Jewish people out among the nations.

Then beyond the preceding, Scripture is quite clear that repentance will be brought to pass *ONLY through Gentile persecution during the coming "time of Jacob's trouble"* (Jer. 30:7-9), with the Jewish people's restoration and a healing of their land occurring *ONLY FOLLOWING MESSIAH'S RETURN, following "the time of Jacob's trouble"* (Lev. 26:38-42; Matt. 24:29-31).

But note what has occurred. The Jewish people have risen up, sought to emancipate themselves apart from either repentance or their Messiah, and return to their land — an unhealed people in an unhealed land.

In essence, they have done *exactly the same thing which Abraham and Sarah sought to do — HELP GOD FULFILL HIS PROMISE*.

In history, this type thing resulted in 4,000 years of trouble, arriving at where matters exist today — *the Middle East aflame because of the presence of the Ishmaelite nations on the one hand (a people who are not even supposed to be there, but are there because of Abraham and Sarah's actions) and the presence of a Jewish nation in their midst (which is not even supposed to be there either, but is there because of a man-made Zionism)*.

Solution to the Problem

But God is about to take care of matters, *exactly as He did during Abraham's day*. As the time for Isaac's birth had not arrived when Ishmael was born, the time for Israel's return to her land had not arrived when statehood was declared May 14, 1948.

During the coming "time of Jacob's trouble," God is going to allow the man of sin *to uproot the Jewish people, destroy their cities, their land, slay a tenth of those in the land in the process, and either lead captive or drive the remainder back out among the nations* (Isa. 6:9-13; Joel 3:6; Luke 21:20-24). And there, out among the nations with the remainder of world Jewry, exactly as God had previously decreed, He will then deal with them *relative to repentance*.

That is what's in store for the Jewish people in the very near future. And, as seen in the long-reaching effects of Abraham and Sarah's attempts to circumnavigate God's plans and purposes, *so will it be in Israel's present attempts to circumnavigate God's plans and purposes*. Scripture, several places, speaks of *the furnace during that day being heated sevenfold* (Lev. 26:18-31; Dan. 3:17-25; Matt. 12:43-45).

Then, the future for Israel following this time is as bright as God's promises. God Himself, personally, will bring matters to pass, through a Divine work, in His way and time, not through man's efforts, in his way and time.

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