

THE VEIL OF
ASTARTE

MOTHER'S DAY

GOD'S REMEMBRANCERS

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Do you not see what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, the fathers light the fire, and the women knead the dough and make cakes to offer to the *Queen of Heaven*. They pour out drink offerings to other gods to arouse my *anger*.

Jeremiah 7:17

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ONE

HISTORY OF MOTHER'S DAY

As the 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica noted that Astarte “*assumes various local forms in the old Semitic world, which has led to consequent fusion and identification with the deities of other nations.*” To start with, let’s consider the history of Mother’s Day:

MOTHER’S DAY HISTORY

The majority of countries that celebrate Mother’s Day do so on the second Sunday of May. On this day, it is common for Mothers to be lavished with presents and special attention from their families, friends and loved ones. But it wasn’t always this way...

Spiritual Origin of Mother’s Day

Only recently dubbed “Mother’s Day,” the

highly traditional practice of honoring of Motherhood is rooted in antiquity, and past rites typically had strong symbolic and spiritual overtones; societies tended to celebrate Goddesses and symbols rather than actual Mothers. *The personal, human touch to Mother's Day is a relatively new phenomenon. The maternal objects of adoration ranged from mythological female deities to the Christian Church itself.* Only in the past few centuries did celebrations of Motherhood develop a decidedly human focus.

Goddess Isis – Early Egyptian Roots

One of the earliest historical records of a society celebrating a Mother deity can be found among the ancient Egyptians, who held an annual festival to honor the goddess Isis, who was commonly regarded as the Mother of the pharaohs...So the story goes, after Isis' brother-husband Osiris was slain and dismembered in 13 pieces by their jealous brother Seth, Isis re-assembled Osiris' body and used it to impregnate herself. She then gave birth to Horus..Horus grew up and defeated Seth, and then became the first ruler of a unified Egypt. Thus Isis earned her stature as the Mother of the pharaohs.

It is interesting to note that the Mother and Son imagery of Isis and Horus—in which Isis cradles and suckles her son—is strikingly similar to that of the Virgin Mary and baby Jesus.

Cybele – Ancient Roman Celebration

The festival of Isis was also celebrated by the Romans who used the event to commemorate an important battle and mark the beginning of Winter... Yet the Roman root of Mother's Day is

perhaps more precisely found in the celebration of the Phrygian goddess Cybele, or Magna Mater (Great Mother).

Cybele stems from the Greek Goddess Rhea, who was the Mother of most of the major deities including Zeus. Rhea was therefore celebrated as a mother goddess, and the festival took place around the time of the Vernal Equinox...

<http://www.mothersdaycentral.com/about-mothersday/history/>

We must remember that Astarte, as *Britannica Online Encyclopedia* noticed, “*Later ...became assimilated with the Egyptian deities Isis and Hathor (a goddess of the sky and of women).*” Upon careful examination, this is the specific fulfillment of Jeremiah 17:2 regarding “*groves*” or “*images of Astarte*” – the Egyptian goddess Isis being **assimilated** or having **resemblance** to Astarte. The same is true for the “Phrygian goddess Cybele, or Magna Mater (Great Mother)”, and the “Greek Goddess Rhea, who was the Mother of most of the major deities including Zeus.”

That Semiramis, under the name of Astarte, was worshipped not only as an incarnation of the Spirit of God, but as the mother of mankind, we have very clear and satisfactory evidence. There is no doubt that “the Syrian goddess” was Astarte (LAYARD’S Nineveh and its Remains). Now, the Assyrian goddess, or Astarte, is identified with Semiramis by Athenagoras (Legatio), and by Lucian (De Dea Syria). These *testimonies in regard to Astarte, or the Syrian goddess, being, in one aspect, Semiramis, are quite decisive.*¹ **The name Astarte, as applied to her, has reference to her as being Rhea or Cybele, the tower-bearing goddess...** (The Two Babylons -

Alexander Hislop, p. 78)

As far as God is concerned, they are all “*images of Astarte*”! The modern day celebration of Mother’s Day today has been in observance just in recent history. Consider the article:

A History of Mother’s Day

By Holly Hildebrand

Houston Chronicle Interactive

The first celebrations in honor of mothers were held in the spring in ancient Greece. They paid tribute to Rhea, the Mother of the Gods. During the 17th century, England honored mothers on “Mothering Sunday” celebrated on the fourth Sunday of Lent.

In the United States, Julia Ward Howe suggested the idea of Mother’s Day in 1872. Howe, who wrote the words to the “Battle Hymn of the Republic”, saw Mother’s Day as being dedicated to peace.

Anna Jarvis of Philadelphia is credited with bringing about the official observance of Mother’s Day. Her campaign to establish such a holiday began as a remembrance of her mother, who died in 1905 and who had, in the late 19th century, tried to establish “Mother Friendship Days” as a way to heal the scars of Civil War.

Two years after her mother died, Jarvis held a ceremony in Grafton, West Virginia to honor her. She was so moved by the proceedings that she began a massive campaign to adopt a formal holiday honoring mothers. In 1910, West Virginia became the first state to recognize Mother’s Day. In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson officially proclaimed Mother’s Day as a national holiday to be held on the second

Sunday of May.

But Jarvis' accomplishment soon turned bitter for her. Enraged by the commercialization of the holiday, she filed a lawsuit to stop a 1923 Mother's Day festival and was even arrested for disturbing peace at a war mother's convention where women sold white carnations – Jarvis' symbol for mothers – to raise money. "This is not what I intended," Jarvis said. "I wanted it to be a day of sentiment, not profit!"

When she died in 1948, at age 84, Jarvis had become a woman of great ironies. **Never a mother herself, her maternal fortune dissipated by her efforts to stop the commercialization of the holiday she had founded, Jarvis told a reporter shortly before her death that she was sorry she had ever started Mother's Day.** She spoke these words in a nursing home where every Mother's Day her room had been filled with cards from all over the world.

Today, because and despite Jarvis' efforts, many celebrations of Mother's Days are held throughout the world. Although they do not fall at the same time, such countries as Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia and Belgium also celebrate Mother's Day on the same day as the United States.

<http://www.docstoc.com/docs/2197651/A-history-of-Mothers-Day>

TWO

MOTHER'S DAY VS. MOTHERING SUNDAY

It is noteworthy to consider that the first celebrations of Mother's Day was rooted in paganism and was celebrated in England as "Mothering Sunday" during the 4th Sunday of Lent.

While the modern day observance of *Mother's Day* every 2nd Sunday of May was credited to Anna Jarvis, who eventually turned against her very creation because she saw that the end result became corrupted which was not according to what she had intended initially.

Is it because that Satan had a hand on it, making sure that it would **conform to the** "IMAGE" of the previous one? Although Mother's Day and Mothering Sunday are different as some may say, yet both are celebrated during Sundays and focuses on the ***Mother figure***. Even secular observers noticed the connection

of the modern day celebration with that of its ancient origin which is rooted from pagan festivity celebrating the **Mother deity** and passed on through time.

Anna M. Jarvis's Mother's Day in 1908

In 1908, Anna (Jarvis) petitioned the superintendent of the church where her Mother had spent over 20 years teaching Sunday School. Her request was honored, and on May 10, 1908, the first official Mother's Day celebration took place at Andrew's Methodist Church in Grafton, West Virginia and a church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The West Virginia event drew a congregation of 407 and Anna Jarvis arranged for white carnations—her Mother's favorite flower—to adorn the patrons. Two carnations were given to every Mother in attendance. Today, white carnations are used to honor deceased Mothers, while pink or red carnations pay tribute to Mothers who are still alive. Andrew's Methodist Church exists to this day, and was incorporated into the International Mother's Day Shrine in 1962...

(<http://www.mothersdaycentral.com/about-mothersday/history/>)

Mother's Day vs. Mothering Day

The United States' version of Mother's Day has been exported to many other nations throughout the world. In certain countries there has been little significant cultural adaptation. In other countries, especially those whose tradition stems from the English Mothering Day (which is now also called Mother's Day), the traditions are quite different from those of the United States.

While the United States' version of Mother's

Day—the version most widely exported to the rest of the world—has secular humanist roots followed up by extensive commercialization, **it is interesting to note that many countries, regardless of this Western trend, continue to attach much more symbolic and or religious importance to their Mother's Day celebrations.**

In Spain Mother's Day is tied to the Feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8th. The Virgin Mary is celebrated next to the mothers of the nation. In Ethiopia the holiday is tied to seasons and agriculture, and in Yugoslavia it leads up to Christmas, commemorating the Motherhood of Christ.

<http://www.mothersdaycentral.com/about-mothersday/history/>

As Anna Jarvis even shortly before her death felt sorry for starting Mother's Day, the celebration has already deteriorated into commercialization and many countries continue to attach symbolic and religious importance to it. Moreover, it was a *Methodist Church that initiated the first official Mother's Day celebration.* The church that supported Mother's Day has its roots traceable to Babylon mystery religion:

The Methodist branch of Protestant religion traces its roots back to 1739 where it developed in England as a result of the teachings of John Wesley.

<http://christianity.about.com/od/methodistdenomination/a/methodishistory.htm>

In other words, the modern day celebration of Mother's Day has been tainted and eventually taken are semblance of the former as the "image of Astarte"! **Notice, that it has to be always celebrated on a Sunday also, just like the former one!**

Again, “**resemblance**” means: **the quality of similarity in nature, form, etc.; relative identity or counterpart**. Now, the question is this: Is Mother’s Day not a *counterpart* of Mothering Sunday? The answer is obvious and without a doubt one of the “*images of Astarte*” as the prophet Jeremiah vividly describes:

“The **sin of Judah** is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars; Whilst their children remember their altars and their **groves (images of Astarte)...**” (Jeremiah 17:1-2)

Although Mr. Armstrong has not dwelled too much on the subject of *Mother’s Day*, yet the PCG ministry has basically given much weight on the celebration to its lay membership compared to that of the *Father’s Day*. In an article from the *Trumpet Website – Friday, May 11, 2007, Mother’s Day* was initially endorsed by the ministry:



The image shows a screenshot of a blog post. At the top, there is a profile picture of Stephen Flurry and his name followed by 'EXECUTIVE EDITOR'. The title of the post is 'Put Mom on a pedestal' in a large, bold, black font. Below the title, it says 'Posted by Stephen Flurry at 6:51 am on May 9, 2010'. On the left side of the post, there are social media sharing icons for Twitter, Facebook, Google+, and a comment icon. The main text of the post begins with a large red 'W' and reads: 'ith today being Mother's Day here in the United States, take this opportunity to consider the vital importance of motherhood in building a strong, stable society. According to biblical commands, mothers should be highly honored for the tremendous role they play in our families. The Fifth Commandment includes God's command to honor your mother (Exodus 20:12). In 1 Peter 3:7, the Apostle Peter tells husbands to give honor to the wife.'

With Sunday being Mother’s Day, *consider the vital importance of this pillar of a stable society...Remember—and not only this Mother’s Day—to put Mom on a pedestal. Her God-given role is most praiseworthy and exalted, most beautiful. Most honorable.*

ACTIVITIES



South Africans test out Mother's Day flower fundraiser

SOUTH AFRICA—Members of the Johannesburg congregation got together to sell Mother's Day bouquets on May 12 in an effort to raise money for the building fund, the first time the group has undertaken such a project. In the past, members in Australia and elsewhere have suc-

LEFT (From left) Anny Trietsch, Sandra Trietsch, Eric Trietsch, Ghina Trietsch, Desirée Mofokeng, Otto Trietsch, Chantel van der Lende, and Brendie Muller work at a booth filled with flower bouquets.

cessfully raised funds using the same idea. The previous evening, brethren met at the residence of Local Elder George Githembe and his family, where they worked in carefully planned production lines to arrange bouquets. Some cut flower stems; some arranged; some made advertising signs. Early on Mother's Day, the volunteers set up three stalls. Beautiful weather with clear blue skies prevailed throughout

the day, making conditions ideal for the outdoors event. "After much preparation and prayer, God opened the floodgates, and all flowers were sold before lunchtime," volunteer Rohann Smith said. "This was an opportunity for members to be actively involved in raising funds for the building fund, and the results were most inspiring."

Smith said that members were "united, zealous and eager to sell the flowers" and that being able to sell the full stock of bouquets so quickly was "a wonderful answer to prayer."

Linda Hockema, who helped plan the fundraiser, said, "Without the dedicated prayers and labor of love by the brethren, this fundraiser would not have been such a great success."

By the end of the morning, the group had sold all 60 bouquets and tabulated a profit of R5,603 (\$558.65) for the building fund.

Deacon Eric Trietsch, who helped coordinate the event, said, "The sites for the fundraiser were well chosen, and the ladies were instrumental in making the bouquets. ... Next year we will try to sell even more bouquets." DIVAN MULLER

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ACTIVITIES

Brethren across Australasia break records with Mother's Day fundraiser



AUSTRALIA—Four Australian congregations conducted a record-breaking fundraiser on May 12, selling flowers on a warm, sunny Mother's Day. A total of 280 members in four states raised a total of \$17,090 for the day.

Selling roadside flowers on Mother's Day is a fundraising activity that has grown from a "one-time event" to a major fundraiser for the Melbourne congregation four years ago. This year, 10 Melbourne members became "flower" for a day and earned in a whopping \$4,000 profit on the sale of bouquets and bouquets of flowers. Since its genesis in Melbourne, this activity has grown to "mini" similar enthusiasm and results across Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines.

"Due to the success of the activity, I honestly think a lot of Church members are beginning to realize their individual ability to support the work," Local Church Elder Matthew Robinson said. "By far [it] was the spirit evidenced in literally all who participated. Everyone got behind and supported it, not just willingly, but with a palpable degree of enthusiasm."

Joining in the fundraiser for the first time, the Adelaide congregation banded together to raise a neat \$1,763. "Although smaller in terms of monies raised, Adelaide's effort was definitely the stand-out from the weekend for me," Mr. Robinson said. "Considering this was Adelaide's first outing, I think the South Australian members did an outstanding job, especially given the fact that it was a last-minute decision to undertake the activity."

The Sydney congregation, in its second

year participating in the fundraiser, raised a whopping \$5,297. Members said they could not put a price on the camaraderie, spirit of cooperation, and encouragement generated on the Saturday evening as everyone teamed up to assemble 300 boxes of flowers. An answered prayer, magnificent weather prevailed on Mother's Day, and all customers stepped up every last flower before the end of the day. "Sydney has come a long way since its first attempt at flowers sales last year," Mr. Robinson said. "One aspect which was very rewarding in Sydney was seeing the large amounts of people working so closely together."

Brethren who find up well as soon as the stalls opened before 7 a.m. However, at about 10 a.m., members faced a challenge: at the two busiest flower stalls positioned each side of a major road. Uninformed council officials closed the stands down, stating they were supposed to have council permits—even though this is not a requirement for church groups and non-profit organizations. Confusion

by the congregation officials was quickly defused when the two teams uprooted and relocated their stalls to other high-traffic roads.

"The brethren quickly shifted to another site, maintaining focus and got on with the job," Local Church Elder Brian Sherwood said. Despite having "a spurious closure in the works," the Brisbane congregation raised a bulging \$6,150 for the day, a 25 percent profit increase over last year. "Everyone stuck to their roles, one to the occasion, and everything went like clockwork. It was an outstanding effort, and we can't wait for next year," Mr. Sherwood said.

Young and old members arrange flowers in a hall in Sydney the evening before Mother's Day.

The Philippines, also selling Mother's Day flowers for the second year, raised 80,670 pesos (\$1,950) for sales in Quezon and Angono cities. All stock was cleared by noon. From their reactions, it seemed that the Filipino brethren are keen to have successful the activity was.

"What we noted this year shows the potential this fundraising activity has to be able to generate even more revenue next year," Regional Director Max Bawler said. "With advanced planning, product standardization, and more streamlined organization, I believe we can achieve an Australian national target of \$30,000 next year, and still have great fun, funning and fellowship in the process."

This small fundraising venture used, seen in Melbourne four years ago, has grown into a multi-national endeavor that significantly contributes to God's Work, in its spirit and health joy in His people. But, it is just one of many exciting fundraising initiatives being organized by members throughout the region. ROBB MACDONALD

Arkansas club finishes year

ARKANSAS—The Central Arkansas Speakers' Club held its annual Ladies' Day Luncheon on April 14 at the Riverfront Inn in North Little Rock. Members, with their spouses and guests, celebrated the completion of another successful year and the graduation of one of the group's members, William Buckler. Club director Robert Brown conducted the first half of the meeting, evaluating subtopics and addressing the business portion. James Howard, the club's representative, engaged the members and their wives with interesting, thought-provoking questions. Evangelist Wayne Targson evaluated the speakers and gave the closing lecture during the second half of the event. CHERYL ZEILLNER

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Melbourne sells Mother's Day flowers

AUSTRALIA—On the evening of May 7, the Melbourne congregation pooled its flower-arranging skills to make various arrangements for a fundraiser the following day, Mother's Day.

For many, it was a real eye-opener—especially for the men, who had little experience with flowers and bouquets.

"It has given me an appreciation of what the ladies do each week," said member Ross Macdonald, who helped work on the project throughout the night.

By the end of the evening, members had made 100

arrangements—exactly as planned—ready to sell the next day.

"It was amazing how enjoyable everyone found it to work together in creating something beautiful like boxed flower arrangements," Local Church Elder Kirk Macdonald said. "Working with God's creation, displaying and arranging flowers was a very rewarding activity."

On Mother's Day, brethren sold the flowers at two roadside locations. Many of the customers were on their way to see their mothers and had

left buying flowers to the last minute. Both locations sold out of the flowers by 4:30 in the afternoon.

The net financial result was a profit of \$2,255. Of the fundraiser, Mr. Macdonald commented, "Because of the 100 percent involvement and commitment by the congregation, God certainly added the increase, and has given us the encouragement to find ways to work together at other fundraising activities. We also laid a firm foundation to be able to build a bigger Mother's Day event next year." Andrew Kennedy.

From then on, the PCG ministry has put *Mother's Day* on a pedestal, even using the event every year as a money-making scheme to raise fund for God's house, the *Armstrong Auditorium*.

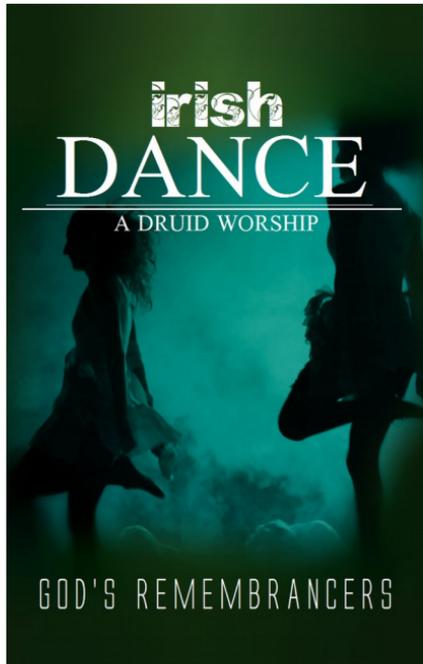
Remember that this "commercialization of the holiday" is *even CONTRARY* to Anna Jarvis' real intention in celebrating *Mother's Day*.

"This is not what I intended,' *Jarvis said*. 'I wanted it to be a day of sentiment, not profit!'" (op. Cit.)

ADDITIONAL READING

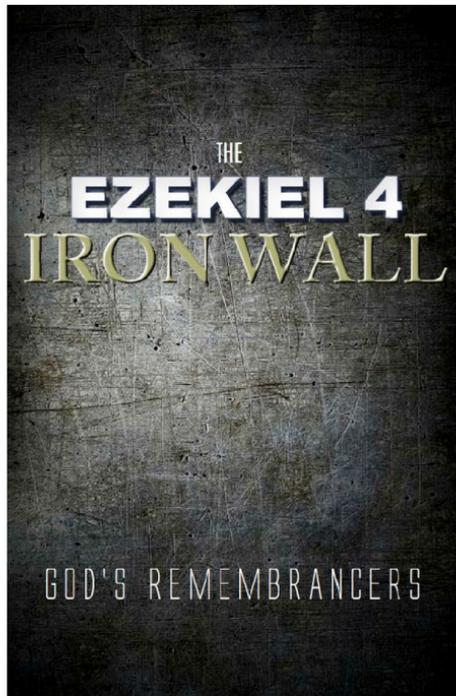
Irish Dance – A Druid Worship

Ancient Ireland has a long history of Kings, Queens, Priests, Paganism and Human Sacrifice. Who are the Irish people? The Celts? Trace the roots of the modern popular Irish dance competition to the ancient groves, pillars and stones of Ireland's elite Druid Society. Find out how this dance is a ritual of Pagan worship that God warned His people to keep away from.



The Ezekiel 4 Iron Wall

The Philadelphia Church of God built a wall to protect itself from spiritual wreckers and marauders. However this wall of separation have become a paradox - a wall that has become destructive, hostile to its Church members, families and even to God Himself. A prophecy in Ezekiel 4 reveals the accuracy of the wall of separation and how this wall have isolated the Church from the True God and it's prophetic end.



CONTACT INFORMATION

To reach the A.R.K. of God Foundation, to order literature or to request additional information.

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