

The Allure of the Goddess

by Carl Teichrib

“The Goddess has now emerged from the dark moon phase of a long-term lunar cycle at a time when humanity is collectively passing through a dark phase in the precessional age solar cycle. With the rebirth of the Goddess, we are being given the opportunity to reclaim her dark aspect.” — Demetra George, *Mysteries of the Dark Moon: The Healing Power of the Dark Goddess*, p. 266.

Goddess worship is alive and well. Berit Kjos, a good friend and author, relates numerous stories of goddess-inspiration making its way into mainstream Christian culture. In her excellent book, *A Twist of Faith*, she describes a visit to her husband’s prairie hometown,

You probably wouldn’t expect to find goddesses in a conservative farming community in North Dakota. I didn’t. But one day when visiting my husband’s rural hometown, a neighbor told us that a new bookstore had just opened in the parsonage of the old Lutheran Church. “You should go see it,” she urged.

I agreed, so I drove to a stately white church, walked to the parsonage next door, and rang the bell. The pastor’s wife opened the door and led me into a large room she had changed into a bookstore, leaving me to browse. Scanning the shelves along the walls, I noticed familiar authors such as Lynn Andrews who freely blends witchcraft with Native American rituals, New Age self-empowerment, and other occult traditions to form her own spirituality.

Among the multicultural books in the children’s section, one caught my attention. Called *Many Faces of the Great Goddess*, it was a “coloring book for all ages.” Page after page sported voluptuous drawings of famed goddesses. Nude, bare-breasted, pregnant, or draped in serpents, they would surely open the minds of young artists to the lure of “sacred” sex and ancient myths.

Driving home, I pondered today’s fast-spreading shift from Christianity to paganism. Apparently, myths and spiritualized sensuality sound good to those who seek new revelations and “higher” truths. Many of the modern myths picture deities that fit somewhere between a feminine version of God and the timeless goddesses pictured in earth-centered stories and cultures. (*A Twist of Faith*, pp. 10-11)

While the New Age Movement has placed goddess worship into a contemporary setting, it’s historical context stretches back millennium.

In the ancient Egyptian mystery religions, Isis was venerated as a universal goddess. Barbara Watterson, author of *Gods of Ancient Egypt*, notes that Isis was “known as ‘The Goddess of Many Names’ and indeed she is found as a form of every great female deity from Nut and Hathor to the Greek moon goddess Astarte.” [p. 72]

Eminent author and historian, Will Durant, writes of this Isis-goddess connection,

Profound, too, was the myth of Isis, the Great Mother. She was not only the loyal sister and wife of Osiris; in a sense she was greater than he, for—like woman in general—she had conquered death through love. Nor was she merely the black soil of the Delta, fertilized by the touch of Osiris-Nile, and making all Egypt rich with her fecundity. She was, above all, the symbol of that mysterious creative power which had produced the

earth and every living thing...She represented in Egypt—as Kali, Ishtar and Cybele represented in Asia, Demeter in Greece, and Ceres in Rome—the original priority and independence of the female principle in creation.... (*The Story of Civilization*, Volume 1, p. 200)

“Great Mother,” “Queen of Heaven,” “Mother of God.” All of these titles have been attached to Isis. Ishtar too, the Babylonian goddess, had similar titles. Moreover, the lines between the various goddesses of antiquity blur, with each mirroring the other in terms of purpose, symbolism, and meaning.

Commenting on this universal goddess aspect, Professor Cesar Vidal writes,

The importance of mother goddesses in the various mythologies of paganism is so evident that even a shallow description could easily fill entire volumes...The mother goddess received different names and external appearances, but, in substance, she was always the same. In Egypt, she was called Isis. In Crete, she was represented as a mother who made friendly contact with snakes. In Greece she was known as Demeter, and in Rome she was worshiped as Cybele, the Magna Mater (Great Mother), a mother goddess of Phrygian origin. There is practically no ancient culture that did not worship this type of deity. (*The Myth of Mary*, pp.74, 75)

Even the ancient Hebrews succumbed to goddess worship. In Jeremiah chapters 7 and 44, we find God chastising the Israelites for worshiping “the Queen of Heaven,” baking cakes to her, offering sacrifices, and purposely choosing to follow the Queen of Heaven rather than Himself.

Our modern culture likewise has a propensity to following the “Queen of Heaven.” The New Age Movement has been a real force in this, bringing the Gaia concept to the forefront—the idea that the Earth is a living organism, a “hypothesis” intrinsically linked to the goddess movement and “Mother Earth.”

Science writer Lawrence E. Joseph explains,

Gaia’s closest cousin is Terra, the Roman Earth goddess; both are kin to Isis of the Egyptians, Kwan Yin of the Chinese, Lakshmi of the Hindus, Yemanja of many African peoples, Shekinah of the Jews from the days of the cabbalah, the Changing Woman of the Navajo, and many others, including Mother Nature, who at one time or another has appeared or occurred to almost everyone. All are sublime female Earth deities, givers of life, wisdom, pleasure, and death. (*Gaia: The Growth of an Idea*, p. 224)

As alluded to in the beginning of this article, Christianity isn’t immune to the allure of the goddess. In 1993, at the Re-Imaging Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2000 women from a variety of protestant denominations were introduced to Sophia, the goddess personification of “Divine Wisdom.” Furthermore, this particular event, which included creating a “sacred space” and Sophia invocations, received funding from a number of major protestant/evangelical church bodies [for more on this event, see *A Twist of Faith*].

“Mother Earth,” too, can be found in our modern church culture—especially through Earth Day celebrations within the Christian community (See *Goddess Earth* by Samantha Smith and Dave Hunt’s *Occult Invasion: The Subtle Seduction of the World and Church*).

But goddess influence within churches goes beyond Mother Earth and Sophia. The biblical figure of Mary has been erroneously elevated to a goddess status by Roman Catholic theologians. She is known as the Queen of Heaven, Mother of God, Eternal Virgin, Queen of Peace, Our Mother, Lady of the Good Death, Co-mediatrix, and Blessed Mother. Thousands of shrines around the world commemorate her. Visions, apparitions, visitations, and channeled messages accompany the mystical experiences of her followers.

Cesar Vidal elaborates,

The idea of the universal motherhood of Mary, which does not appear historically until the 11th century, has a much greater connection with paganism than with Scripture. The same can be said of the representation of Mary with the divine child. This concept was also unknown...in the first centuries of Christianity.

...it is especially significant that Mary worship, which we find in Catholicism and in the Eastern churches, does not stem at any point from biblical concepts, but from the absorption of pagan theologies like those present in the myths of Isis, Demeter and Cybele. (*The Myth of Mary*, p. 86, 89)

Concerning the pagan goddess influence within the Roman concept of “Mary,” historian Will Durant draws a similar conclusion to that of Vidal. Christian apologist Dave Hunt (see *Occult Invasion*), along with a host of other historians and researchers, also recognize this basic linkage. Even occult sources such as H.P. Blavatsky [*Isis Unveiled*, volume II] and Manly P. Hall [*The Secret Teachings of All Ages*] attest to this goddess Roman-Mary interconnection. Sadly, this Romanized-paganized Mary is now being embraced by some within Protestant circles [see T.A. McMahon’s article in the October 2000 issue of *The Berean Call*].

Detailing the broader New Age-goddess/feminist influence within church and society, Berit Kjos writes,

...This new spiritual movement is transforming our churches as well as our culture. It touches every family that reads newspapers, watches television, and sends children to community schools. It is fast driving our society beyond Christianity, beyond humanism—even beyond relativism—toward new global beliefs and values. No one is immune from its subtle pressures and silent promptings. That it parallels other social changes and global movements only speeds the transformation. Yet, most Christians—like the proverbial frog—have barely noticed.

This feminist movement demands new deities or, at least, a re-thinking of the old ones. The transformation starts with self, some say, and women can’t re-invent themselves until they shed the old shackles. So the search for a “more relevant” religion requires new visions of God: images that trade holiness for tolerance, the heavenly for the earthly, and the God who is higher than us for a god who *is* us.

The most seductive images are feminine. They may look like postcard angels, fairy godmothers, Greek earth goddess, radiant New Age priestesses, or even a mythical Mary, but they all promise unconditional love, peace, power, and personal transcendence. To many, they seem too good to refuse. [*A Twist of Faith*, pp. 9-10]

The point that Mrs. Kjos makes is essential to understanding our times: Christianity is facing a paradigm shift of global proportions, and the goddess thrust of the New Age Movement is an important facet of this spiritual and societal-wide change.

In recognizing the impact that this alternative spiritual reality has on our cultural makeup—including its bearing on churches and Christianity—it behooves us to consider the words of Ephesians 6:10-13,

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. There take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. [Ephesians 6:10-13, NKJV]