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Desert Life

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Top Ten Ways to Lose the Promised Land

Dorothy Bliss

(With apologies to C.S. Lewis)

Dear Minions:

I know these are discouraging times, but it's not my fault! What could I do when Jesus of Nazareth agreed to die? How was I to know that his death would atone for the sins of the world? Whoever heard of such a thing? I'm disgusted by the whole affair.

I was double-crossed – and by God himself. Here I was, feeling all elated by the blood, and the whipping, and the suffering of God's son. I mean, after all, he was no friend of ours – casting us out of people and sending us into pigs. I was ready to gloat, and no doubt about it, as Jesus approached death on a cross (one of my better inventions, I must admit). Then I heard this horrible sound – a crashing, rending, squealing that I will never, ever forget. The gates! My beautiful gates were torn off their hinges and Jesus himself came and let souls out. No one ever told me there would be such a crucial twist in the story: that this man's death would stand in for the punishment of everybody! Well I have to tell you, I will NEVER forgive him for that.

But I have been thinking (obsessing, really) about it a lot lately, and I have a plan. It's still not over. Jesus went back to Heaven where he belongs, thank Darkness, and although he is planning to come back we do have some time. We still can get a lot accomplished. The key here is strategy. We need to strike hard and strike fast. So I think we should use some of the tried-and-true methods that worked so well for us in the past.

Yes, I'm thinking of the people of Israel. I know they are God's chosen ones but, if you remember, they responded really well to our techniques before. Many of the new so-called Christians (such an offensive word!) are in fact Jewish, and so they should react nicely to my – I mean, our – plan. Others were once pagans (deserters, I call them) and we can easily capitalize on their old habits and patterns by adapting our methods.

The Israelites, if you remember, had one thing that always kept them going, always kept them coming back to God, and that was “the Promised Land:” a home of their own



Desert life, Chris Calderone