

Commentary — From the Margins

A New Philadelphia Apologetic

When I began to reread prophecy and write what I was reading in 2002, I completed the initial draft of *A Philadelphia Apologetic (APA)* in two and a half months. By the fall of 2004, I knew that *APA* needed to be updated, and I began to rewrite chapters, but I did not get far before I realized that enough information was coming from typological exegesis that I needed to add to what I had just written. However, the demands of writing for numerous websites prevented me from returning to *APA*. Those demands remain. Thus, to satisfy both the demands for new pieces on my home website, and to finally return to *APA*, I have opted to use the *Commentaries* to produce the essays that will become chapters; so the serialized edition will remain as it presently is until enough *Commentaries* have been written for a new published edition. At that time, the serialized chapters will be replaced by the published edition.

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About the Cover Photo

Platanthera camtschatic — Kamchatka Orchid



In 1983, I crossed Kodiak Island's Ugak Bay, climbed Gull Point, and above the island's tree line, in the domain of wind and eagles, I photographed the orchid used on the front cover of both the first edition of *A Philadelphia Apologetic* and on this new edition. I choose to use the flower on the first edition because of what "orchids" represented in Koine Greek. After all, in that first edition I theologically ventured far from the comfort zone of a layman; for only months before I had been drafted (in a manner a little less dramatic than the Apostle Paul's calling, but in a manner that was certainly as traumatic to me) to reread biblical prophecy. Thus, armed only with the ability to read and to produce texts, I had

set forth to challenge the social constructs that underpin Western culture and historical Christianity. And to do this without the support of any patron but the Almighty took more audacity than even I had displayed when I set out, with no prior fishing or sailing experience, in 1979, to commercially fish a small craft in the Bering Sea; or had displayed when, in 1988, I entered the graduate English program at University of Alaska Fairbanks with no undergraduate degree or English coursework beyond the Freshman Composition sequence.

However, I have decided to use the same photo on the new edition of *A Philadelphia Apologetic* for an altogether different reason: the Christianity of Christ Jesus and the early Church requires a hosting mental landscape and culture. Until the single kingdom of the world (*cf.* Rev 11:15; Dan 7:9-14) becomes the kingdom of the Father and His Christ, this kingdom of the world remains under the control of the defeated but-not-yet-replaced prince of this world. Prior to when the single kingdom of this world [with its hundreds of competing fiefdoms] is given to one like the Son of Man, Christians cannot establish a kingdom of God here on earth. They can, by trying to do God's job for Him, only establish another division within the single kingdom of the Adversary; they can only make themselves agents of the prince of this world. And this is what happened in the 4th-Century CE when "Christianity" became the official religion of the Roman Empire.

Until the single kingdom of the world is given to the Son of Man, Christianity remains a way of life at odds with a world consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32). By keeping the precepts of the law of God, Christians are to actively rebel against sin or lawlessness (1 John 3:4). They are not to compromise the commandments of God. Once mentally liberated from servitude to sin, they are not to return to sin, thereby making themselves willing bondservants to disobedience. Sin has no dominion of them (Rom 6:14); so any voluntary return to lawlessness—this especially includes transgressing the Sabbath commandment—is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, which will not be forgiven (Matt 12:31-32) for it is not what goes into a Christian that defiles the disciple but what comes from the heart of the person (Matt 15:18-19). Whereas the *old written code* regulated the actions of the hands and the body (Matt 5:21, 27), the laws of God written on the disciple's heart and placed in his or her mind regulates the desires of the heart and the thoughts of the mind (*vv.* 22, 28). Under Christ Jesus, the commandments of God move from outside of the disciple where they are inscribed on two tablets of stone to inside the disciple where they are inscribed on two tablets of flesh (*cf.* Heb 8:10; Jer 31:33). Thus, disobedience that comes from the heart of a disciple defiles the disciple. And disciples are not even to eat with a willingly defiled "Christian" (1 Cor 5:11).

The "Christian" who transgresses the Sabbath commandment breaks the single law of God (Jas 2:10). Although a disciple can associate with the immoral of this world that have not been born of Spirit and as such remain unwillingly consigned to disobedience, the disciple is not to even eat with one who bears the name of a brother in Christ yet who voluntarily transgresses the law of God. This is a hard command that Paul has given, but a command based upon the long standing practice of God delivering His physical firstborn son (Exod 4:22) into the hand of Death for that nation's lawlessness. Therefore, disciples are not to

associate with those who claim to be *Christian* but who do not strive to keep the precepts of the law; disciples are not to voluntarily join with other born-of-Spirit disciples who attempt to enter God's rest on the 8th-day. The disciple who lives by every word that has proceeded from the mouth of God (Matt 4:4), walking as Christ Jesus walked (1 John 2:6), will separate him or herself from lawlessness, especially from lawlessness within the household of God for judgment is now upon this household (1 Pet 4:17).

Disciples are under grace, the mantle of Christ Jesus' righteousness, a garment (Gal 3:27) that disciples put on morning and evening in the same way that *the daily* sacrifice was offered on the physical altar of the physical temple in physical Jerusalem. But grace does not give disciples permission to sin (*cf.* Rom 3:31; 6:1, 15-16). Grace is the righteousness of Christ Jesus that temporarily covers the inadvertent law-breaking of disciples in the heavenly realm in a similar manner to how the sacrifice of lambs covered the inadvertent law-breaking of ancient Israel in this physical realm. Grace is not ongoing unmerited pardon of sins that allows disciples to continue sinning as those whom Jesus will deny in their resurrections presently teach (Matt 7:21-23). Grace is a covering that postpones the payment of the death penalty for these sins—the death penalty must still be paid, and will be paid by either the disciple when his or her judgment is revealed or by Satan after he is released for a short while from the bottomless pit.

Satan is the spiritual king of Babylon (Isa 14:4-21), the spiritual hierarchy presently reigning over the single kingdom of this world. And here a mystery of God has been long concealed: the logic used by the 4th-century Church to conclude that the Roman Emperor and Roman Empire were the visible representations of an invisible God and the Kingdom of Heaven is found in the Apostle Paul's writings—the visible reveals the invisible (Rom 1:20). But these early Church fathers did not well understand typology; for the physical must precede the spiritual (1 Cor 15:46) in the way that the first Adam was a type of the last Adam (*cf.* Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:45). The physical does not long co-exist with the spiritual. The covenant by which the physical descendants of the patriarch Jacob were made the holy nation of God (Exod 19:5-6) ended when this nation killed the Covenanter at Calvary; this covenant was abolished (Eph 2:14-16). The holy nation of God is now a people who were not before a nation (1 Pet 2:9-10); it is the Christian Church, spiritual Israel (Rom 2:29). But the Church, which began when Jesus breathed on ten of His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22), could not come into existence until after the Sinai covenant was abolished, and circumcision was not of hands but by Spirit, and not of foreskins but of hearts (Deu 30:6). Therefore, the physically uncircumcised person who, by faith, keeps the precepts of the law will have his [or her] uncircumcision counted as circumcision. This person had been dwelling in a far land [that of *the nations*], and this person now has been drawn from this far land by the Father (John 6:44, 65) and has been made alive in the heavenly realm through receiving a second birth (John 3:3-8). This *new creature* with real life in the heavenly realm still dwells in the tent of flesh of the *old man*, but this new creature is born free from bondage to disobedience (*cf.* Rom 6:14; 8:2); so this *new creature* has the privilege of being able to keep all that God commanded Israel to keep (Deu 30:1-

2) when, on the plains of Moab, He made a second covenant with Israel (Deu 29:1), a covenant that the Apostle Paul labels as “righteousness based on faith” (Rom 10:6 — *cf.* Deu 30:11-14; Rom 10:6-8). This is Paul’s “law of faith” (Rom 3:27); for the Koine Greek linguistic icon *pistis* that is translated into English as *faith* is an active noun, not something English uses. The *faith* and *belief* about which Paul writes do not have him naming a static mindset, but have him commanding that the disciple engage these mindsets by implementing what it means to have faith or belief. To believe God is to obey His voice in all that has proceeded from His mouth. To have faith is to actively keep the precepts of God’s law. For the tent of flesh in which the *new creature* born of Spirit presently dwells precedes the spiritual or glorified body in which this *new creature* will dwell when judgments are revealed if Christ Jesus knows this *new creature* while this son of God dwells in flesh. If there is a natural or physical body, there is also a spiritual or glorified body (1 Cor 15:44) that will come after death. Disciples who have born the image of the first Adam, a man of dust, will bear the image of the last Adam, a life-giving spirit (v. 49). But the latter follows the former and does not coexist with the former.

Flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven (1 Cor 15:50). That which is perishable must put on imperishability. And the Roman Emperor was a perishable king, and the Roman Empire a perishable kingdom. Neither was or is of heaven. Neither was a type or shadow of the kingdom of heaven. Neither was even a type or shadow of Babylon, the humanoid appearing (Dan 2:31-33) hierarchy of the Adversary that presently reigns over the children of disobedience—and will continue to reign until the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Father and Son halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation ... Babylon’s shadow extends from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, through the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes IV, the shadow of the endtime king of the North. Babylon’s shadow does not include the Roman Empire, or anything Roman. And all who insert Rome, the Roman Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, the Roman Church, or the Roman See into Scripture or into endtime prophecies about Israel are false teachers, deceitful workmen, the ministers of the Adversary (2 Cor 11:13-15). These men and woman are to be shunned.

But the disciples of Christ Jesus will not shun false teachers who have secretly brought into Christendom “destructive heresies” (2 Pet 2:1). Most of Christendom follows ancient and modern false teachers, thereby causing “the way of truth” to “be blasphemed” (v. 2)—and frankly, unknown to all but the few Christians who hold the testimony of Jesus (Rev 12:17), which is the spirit of prophecy (Rev 19:10).

From the perspective of the prince of this world, the spiritual king of Babylon, Christendom began as a parasite spreading rapidly across the fiefdoms of his single kingdom of the world. He attempted to squash this parasite that spread when persecuted. He had disciples *martyred*, thereby causing the name of an errant teacher, Justin Martyr [yes, he taught error; he taught disciples to transgress the law of God], to become the verb representing the taking of outwardly innocent life. But the prince of this world did not successfully stop the spread of true Christianity (which was no more an evolving religion than God,

who is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, is an evolving God) until his kingdom of this world swallowed the parasite, thereby making Christendom another fiefdom in his kingdom. As a dog biting and swallowing its fleas, the Roman Empire bit, then swallowed Christendom.

Actually, because of the lawlessness of the early Church from the middle of the 1st-Century CE onward, God delivered this spiritually circumcised nation of Israel into the hand of the spiritual king of Babylon, thus making Christendom a curse, a horror, a terror, a reproach to all nations in the same way that the Lord had delivered physically circumcised Israel into the hand of the physical king of Babylon to be a horror, a hissing, a reproach to all nations (Jer 29:15-23). Because of its lawlessness, God made natural Israel like vile figs that were so rotten they couldn't be eaten (v. 17). God gave to natural Israel "statutes that were not good and rules by which" the nation "could not have life" (Ezek 20:25). He defiled that nation, His firstborn natural son, through its gifts in that the nation offered up all its firstborns that He might devastate the nation (v. 26). Yes, God gave to natural Israel statutes that caused the nation to burn its firstborns; for this natural firstborn holy nation was the shadow and type of the spiritual firstborn holy nation to which God gave equally destructive statutes and rules so that it could not live but would perish in the lake of fire ... this doesn't sound like the actions of a loving God, does it? But is there injustice on God's part, the rhetorical question Paul asked (Rom 9:14). And Paul's answer remains valid: "By no means!" For as Paul notes, God told Moses that He would have mercy on whom He chose to have mercy, and compassion on whom He chose to have compassion (v. 15)—and the disciple who spurns God by returning to lawlessness when the disciple has been set free from bondage to disobedience denies God, denies Christ, and denies grace. So to lawless disciples who deny Him, God gave commands that will cause His firstborn spiritual son to perish in the lake of fire, the foremost of these commands being Sunday observance.

Because of many gospels of lawlessness that circulated through the fellowships of Asia Minor while Paul yet lived, all of the churches in Asia turned away from Paul (2 Tim 1:15) ... to which of these fellowships that turned away from Paul will a disciple turn to learn the teachings of Jesus? Paul wrote to the saints at Corinth, "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!" (2 Cor 13:5). Paul then adds, "Your restoration is what we pray for. For this reason I write these things while I am away from you, that when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down" (vv. 9-10).

Your restoration is what we pray for—the saints at Corinth had separated themselves from Paul for any number of reasons [they were no longer of Christ], but one reason would be the antifamily gospel of Jesus, who said that He had come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law (Matt 10:35); that whoever loves father or mother more than Jesus was not worthy of Him (v. 37); that when told His own mother and brothers sought to see Him said, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers ... whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and

sister and mother” (Matt 12:46-50). The physical siblings of the man Jesus served as a type and copy of spiritual siblings; the birth of His physical siblings preceded the birth of spiritual siblings (Rom 8:29). While Jesus lived, His brothers did not believe in Him (John 7:5). Only after He was resurrected and glorified did Jesus’ natural brothers became the spiritual siblings who would write the epistles of James and Jude. Thus, Christianity deemphasizes the importance of physical relationships and emphasizes separation from this present evil world, thereby making Christianity a belief paradigm that draws physical subsistence from the kingdom of this world while flowering as orchids do on a hosting medium.

Again, in all of Scripture the physically visible things of this world precede and reveal the invisible spiritual things of God. But until the single kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Father and Son 1260 days into the Tribulation, the kingdom of heaven can only be as an orchid, a beautiful flowering stalk that isn’t of this world.

Those who taught that the Roman Empire was a model of, or a shadow and copy of the kingdom of heaven were liars throughout in the first millennium CE; their spiritual descendants remain liars. They are to be shunned. Certainly, no disciple should ever eat of their bread or drink of their wine; for what fellowship has obedience with lawlessness?

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