

## Commentary — From the Margins *No Room to Work*

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This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. But now, *since I no longer have any room for work in these regions*, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, *I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while*. At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For *if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings*. When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. / I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, *that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints*, so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. (Rom 15:22–32 emphasis added)

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1.

Seventeen years after the Apostle Paul received a revelation of Christ Jesus, he returned to Jerusalem where James, Peter, and John, the pillars of the early Church, perceived that Paul had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised. James, Peter, and John gave to Paul the right hand of fellowship, telling Paul and Barnabas to continue their work with the uncircumcised and to remember the poor ... if Paul was entrusted with the gospel to the nations, it would logically seem that the poor Paul was to remember were uncircumcised poor, not the poor of Jerusalem.

A famine was occurring in Jerusalem during the years when Paul wrote his treatise to the Romans and his epistles to the holy ones at Corinth. Foodstuffs were not available. Correspondingly, there was a dearth of letters, of gospels, of admonition coming from Jerusalem during these years. Food was available in Macedonia and Achaia, a juxtaposition reminiscent of what Moses told the children of Israel before they crossed the Jordan to enter the Promised Land: “And if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you today, to love the Lord your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil. And he will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you shall eat and be full” (Deut 11:13–15).

“Food” feeds both the outer self, the person’s fleshly body, as well as the inner self, born of God as a son, but not the same *food*. What Paul wrote to the various churches in the cities of Macedonia and Achaia was *food* for the inner self, while at the same time rains were coming in their due seasons in Macedonia and Achaia [Greece], but were absent in Judea where rebellion against Caesar was simmering, rebellion that would result in the razing of Herod’s temple in 70 CE.

Is the juxtaposition between rains and epistles coming to holy ones in Macedonia and Achaia while there was drought, famine, and no writings in Judea merely coincidental? The juxtaposition could be nothing more than *happenstance*, but that probably is not the case. For when the children of Israel first entered the Promised Land, the Lord communicated directly with His firstborn physical son (from Ex 4:22) through the giving of rain and the withholding of rain, with “rain” forming a shadow and type of the giving of His spirit to Israel, with this latter *Israel* being the nation circumcised of heart.

When the spirit [πνεῦμα] was first given to Jesus’ disciples, a new *Israel* was born of God as His firstborn son, with Christ Jesus being the First of the firstfruits and with all of the firstfruits being God’s firstborn son. Thus, the slate was erased. A new son was born. A new generation of the children of Israel was about to enter into God’s rest, the Promised Land of heaven. And what Moses spoke to the children of Israel on the plains of Moab pertained to Jesus’ disciples in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century when spiritual life and eternal death was set before outwardly circumcised and uncircumcised converts who were as newly born children born to Hebrew parents, uncircumcised of heart until hearts were cleansed by a journey of faith equivalent in length to Abraham’s journey from Ur of the Chaldeans to Haran [death of the old man/self] and then on to Canaan, the Promised Land. Christian converts, outwardly circumcised and uncircumcised, must leave Babylon (the kingdom of this world) and mentally trek to Jerusalem, where the temple of God will be constructed on the foundation that Paul laid (see 1 Cor 3:10–11), with *Philadelphia* standing on this foundation as pillars and reaching upward to the endtime harvest of God in the Endurance, the 1260 days immediately preceding the coming of the Messiah.

The drought and resulting famine that was occurring in Jerusalem when Paul wrote the most significant of his epistles to Gentile fellowships placed stress on

Jews in Judea, the *unbelievers* from whom Paul asked the holy ones at Rome to pray for his deliverance. These *unbelievers* were observant Jews who claimed to see and understand the mysteries of God. These *unbelievers* influenced all of the holy ones in Jerusalem who continued to place importance on the flesh as evidenced by there being four men who were under a vow when Paul came to Jerusalem to deliver the relief foodstuffs gathered in Macedonia and Achaia (see Acts 21:23). The customs of observant Jews in Jerusalem were vain—and when these observant Jews accepted Jesus as Lord and became *believers*, they continued to practice their vain customs. They didn't understand that they were the temple of God, that Herod's temple ceased to have significance when Jesus was resurrected from the dead as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering and appeared on this same day to ten of His disciples, breathed on them and thereby created a new synagogue separate and apart from the *unbelievers'* temple, but geographically located in earthly Jerusalem.

Herod's temple had no relevance to the holy ones when Paul wrote his epistles and drought struck earthly Jerusalem, but even Paul did not understand this ... Paul had limited realization that he, in his person, was the representation of every saint when he wrote, "Now you [saints at Corinth] are the body of Christ and individually members of it" (1 Cor 12:27). By extension, Paul was the Body of Christ and individually a member of it; for the saints who walked as Jesus walked looked spiritually like Jesus. Thus, every saint who walked/walks as Jesus walked looked/looks like Jesus, thereby being the fractal image of Jesus, making *Christ* a fractal that incorporates every disciple who walked/walks as Jesus walked. The Christian who doesn't look like Jesus is not a *Christian* at all, but a son of the Adversary.

Because even the holy ones at Jerusalem couldn't break away from the *unbelievers* and the earthly temple there, rain was being withheld—not because of the *unbelievers*, but because the holy ones would not separate themselves from the *unbelievers*, even continuing to worship at the temple where Paul purified himself (Acts 21:26). Thus, the dire situation in which the holy ones at Jerusalem found themselves was, really, the Lord directly "communicating" with the holy ones as He said He would through Moses when the holy ones entered into God's rest.

What happens when a sibling attempts to intervene when a parent is "communicating" with another sibling? Doesn't the parent tell the intruding sibling to go away, that what is going on is none of that sibling's business? That is, from my experience both as a child and as a parent, what happens. So was famine relief for the saints at Jerusalem Paul's business ... there was certainly genuine need; there was real hunger; but nothing short of the destruction of Herod's temple stopped the holy ones from continuing to worship there.

Perhaps it was because James, the brother of Jesus, was killed by the *unbelievers of the temple* as James, the brother of John, had been killed years earlier that caused the Lord to insure that the earthly temple would be destroyed and not rebuilt on its foundation. But more likely, the destruction of the temple was made necessary because the holy ones' refused to separate themselves from

the *unbelievers* that worshiped there—and would have returned to worship in Herod’s temple if the regional tensions that erupted in 66 CE had passed without the razing of the building.

Disciples are to separate themselves from unbelievers, both circumcised unbelievers and uncircumcised unbelievers. The flesh has no importance: an unbeliever is an *unbeliever*. An unbelieving Christian is an *unbeliever*. An unbelieving Muslim is an *unbeliever*. An unbelieving Jew is an *unbeliever*. And while separation concerning worldly commerce isn’t under discussion [but will be in the Endurance], separation in worship, in marriage, in housing, in lifestyle is: a *believer* isn’t to worship with *unbelievers*. Believers and unbelievers do not today worship the same God, nor do they pray to that God in the name of the same “Christ.”

Because every believer was once an *unbeliever*, marriages exist between believers and unbelievers, marriages that have resulted in children and extended families. As per Paul’s instructions, where the unbelieving spouse wishes to remain in the marriage, the marriage remains valid and the unbelieving spouse and the children are sanctified, meaning that they are “covered” by the righteousness of the believing spouse so that prayers are heard and that upon demonstrated obedience they can be saved. But marriages in which the unbelieving spouse is not content to dwell in peace with the believer, the marriage should end for the marriage is one that would not have been made after the conversion of the believing spouse—and no marriage should be made between a believing Christian and an unbelieving Jew even though both keep the commandments of God. By extension, no shared worship service should occur. Believing Christians don’t today belong in the synagogues of rabbinical Judaism, nor did believing Christians belong in Herod’s temple once Jesus was resurrected from death, something that was not understood even though the Lord by sending drought and famine over Judea was directly communicating with the holy ones, but in a *language* that was no longer understood by the saints.

The above becomes important in the Affliction; for the two witnesses, having the power to shut the sky so that no rain falls on an area, a region, a nation during the days of their prophesying (Rev 11:6), will use the same form of “communication” with Christians in that affected area or region as the Lord used with the holy ones in Jerusalem mid 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE. If the two witnesses see Christians, liberated from indwelling sin and death at the Second Passover, returning to sin, they will *tell* these Christians to stop doing what they are beginning to do by shutting off the rain in that area, with Christians in the dry intermountain region of the United States of America not “hearing” the words of the two witnesses until these two strike the region with other plagues, ones that cannot be mistaken or misread or ignored.

## 2.

The Apostle Paul is not today known for exhausting the opportunity to preach the gospel of Christ Jesus in Macedonia and Achaia [Greece], but for his epistles to various assemblies from Rome to Asia Minor ... it is what he wrote that has far

outlasted what he did. And this is how every servant of God will be remembered here on earth after his or her death, with most who have written in the name of the Lord having written heresy or drivel; i.e., nothing worth remembering. This is not, however, how faithful servants appear in heaven where their lives are epistles in the Book of Life.

The dichotomy between what a person says or writes and how a person lives was addressed by Christ Jesus: “Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:19–20). The scribes and Pharisees that Jesus named are Paul’s *unbelievers in Judea*.

Observant Jews have continuously sought purity through the works of their hands since a remnant of natural Israel returned from Babylon by the decree of King Cyrus, but these observant Jews are no more to be believed today that they were to be believed in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century when they delivered Paul to Caesar albeit not in a manner like that in which Paul had anticipated going to Rome. And therein lies importance that we, as human beings, too often overlook: Paul wrote to the saints at Rome what he anticipated doing, and what he prayed would be the will of God—

Why wasn’t Paul delivered from unbelievers in Judea? He was warned several times about what would happen to him. Did Paul believe that the prayers of the saints—that his prayers—would change what the prophet Agabus did and said: “he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands and said, ‘Thus says the Holy Spirit, ‘This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles’” (Acts 21:11)? Or was Paul truly ready to die in Jerusalem and not go to Rome and Spain as he answered Luke and Philip (*v.* 13). Had Paul accomplished enough that he was ready to die?

How the Father and the Son accomplish those things which they intend to do isn’t how human sons of God would accomplish the same tasks ... was Paul correct in collecting contributions for the poor in Macedonia and Achaia for the saints in Jerusalem? His reasoning was evident: because these Gentile converts now shared in the spiritual blessings that first came to converts of the unbelievers in Judea—spiritual blessings that came to converts not to the natural descendants of Israel—these Gentile converts owed to converts from Judaism material blessings. The preceding doesn’t seem correct. This would be equivalent to saying that these Gentile converts remained second class citizens in the house of God, which Paul knew wasn’t true.

Without thinking, Peter had temporarily assigned to Gentile converts at Antioch second class status when he separated himself from outwardly uncircumcised converts upon the arrival of the *Circumcision Faction* from Jerusalem.

The majority culture in a region doesn’t usually think about what it means to be a second class citizen, about what it means not to be able to use public

drinking fountains, about what it means not to be able to “buy” because stores are closed or because there is nothing for sale that doesn’t have pork or lard in it. The majority culture assumes that everyone else can do things its way, that the majority culture is entitled to the support of minority cultures. And apparently a similar *majority culture ideology* existed in the Church of God in mid 1<sup>st</sup>-Century to the extent that Paul said that Gentile converts, still in the minority, sharing in the spiritual blessings that came to Israel owed to Jewish converts material blessings, and this was simply not true: Paul made a similar mistake as Peter made when Peter separated himself from Gentile converts (see Gal 2:11–14). The mistake is a little harder to see for Paul doesn’t say much about the underlying constructs for why he was assembling a collection for the saints in Jerusalem aside from there was famine in Judea.

Certainly if the saints in Macedonia and Achaia wished to assist hungry saints in Jerusalem, they were free to do so, and they should do so if they could, but not because they owed anything to these saints other than brotherly compassion. But these saints in Macedonia and Achaia should first assist the poor among themselves—and from what Paul wrote to the saints at Corinth concerning taking the Passover sacraments (1 Cor 11:21), this was not happening ... why were there hungry saints at Corinth when Corinth was participating in the collection for the saints in Jerusalem (see 1 Cor 16:1–3)?

Can you see the problem? The saints at Jerusalem were mostly converts from unbelieving natural descendants of the patriarchs. They were all previous unbelievers. They were not spiritually different from Gentiles other than they had no excuse for their unbelief for the Scriptures were, until the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century, committed to their safe keeping. They were loved by the Lord for the sake of their ancestors, just as Gentiles were also loved for the sake of their ancestor Noah, a righteous man: all of humankind alive today are descendants of righteousness even though they themselves are unbelievers and the serfs or sons of the Adversary.

Paul made an assumption that because the saints in Jerusalem preceded in time the saints in Macedonia and Achaia that these Gentile converts owed support to them whereas at least in the case of Corinth, these Gentile converts were not well supporting their own poor. Therefore, Paul’s reason for going to Jerusalem—to deliver the collection made for the saints there—lacks the same sort of spiritual validity that his ministry to the various cities throughout Macedonia and Achaia had. And because he went to Jerusalem when warned not to go, Paul would go to Rome not as a free Roman citizen but as a prisoner ... there is no indication that he ever got to Spain, where he also intended to go.

But it is in Paul going to Rome as a prisoner and not as a free man where the will of God is seen—

In the firstborn natural son of God [from Ex 4:22], freedom or bondage of the flesh reveals in type the status of the inner self of a future Israel, the firstborn spiritual son.

In order for Paul to serve in his person as a shadow and type of the Christian Church, he had to be of natural Israel; i.e., he had to be of the firstborn natural son.

If the Church were to die, Paul had to lose his freedom of movement in a manner analogous to Israel being delivered into the hands of enemies.

Vice versa, since Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul as the representative of the Gentile Church was imprisoned in a manner analogous to Israel going into slavery first in Egypt, then second in Assyria [the northern kingdom] and in Babylon [the southern kingdom and Jerusalem].

Paul's imprisonment that is analogous to Israel's imprisonment in Egypt is seen in Romans chapter seven:

What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet *if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin*. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For *apart from the law, sin lies dead. I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died*. The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. / Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. For we know that the law is spiritual, but *I am of the flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate*. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. / So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For *I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members*. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. (Rom 7:7–25 emphasis added)

The inner self, made alive through Paul having received a second breath of life, the breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] that is the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον], was imprisoned in a tent of flesh sold under sin as Hebrews in Egypt were the property of Pharaoh until the nation's Passover liberation. So freedom of the flesh as Paul experienced this freedom was not truly freedom at all, but slavery to sin that must be resisted with all of Paul's might.

For Paul and for 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Christians who were Isaac (see Gal 4:21–31), freedom was not for the outer self but was of the inner self raised from death in a resurrection like that of Christ Jesus. The outer self continued to serve sin, doing the very things that Paul hated. So the resurrection about which Paul writes in Romans chapter six pertained to the inner self that was previously dead. There would, necessarily, come a resurrection of the outer self from death that formed the mirror image of the resurrection of the inner self, meaning that what Paul writes about not serving sin *after* the inner self has been resurrected from death pertains inversely to endtime disciples not serving sin *before* their outer selves are resurrected from death.

Although Paul's outer self continued to serve sin, doing the things that he hated, Paul's inner self served the law of God which was in Paul's mind—freedom for Paul meant being able to serve the law of God, with this freedom being analogous to Moses asking Pharaoh to let Israel go into the wilderness three days' journey to worship the Lord.

Israel's slavery to Pharaoh was spiritually equivalent to Paul's flesh being bought and sold by sin, with Paul as the representative of every Christian in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century—a Hebrew who was individually called by the Lord (see Acts 9:3–5). In himself and by his understanding, Paul was individually the Body of Christ and part of the collective Body of Christ that consisted of all individual Christians, for again, every Christian will be a fractal image of Christ Jesus, with “Christ” being the fractal. Hence every Christian will look [in his or her mannerisms and obedience to God] like Christ Jesus, the reason that Christians are individually and collectively the Body of Christ; i.e., are individually and collectively one image. If a *Christian* doesn't look like Christ Jesus, the *Christian* is not of Christ.

The above is important for a multitude of reasons, the greatest of which is that for a Christian not to strive against the flesh that remains sold to sin is for the Christian to serve the Adversary as his willing serf—it is never good enough for a disciple to say, *That's just the way I am*, when that way deviates in even the slightest manner from how Jesus lived His life:

The Christian who is gay or is a lesbian cannot say, *That's just the way I have always been*, and expect to enter the kingdom of God;

The Christian man who is effeminate cannot say, *I've always been this way*, and expect to enter the kingdom;

The Christian man who abuses his wife cannot say, *Well what am I supposed to do when she doesn't obey me*, and expect to enter the kingdom;

The Christian woman who dresses immodestly cannot say, *Aren't I free to dress as I please*, and expect to enter the kingdom;



The Christian who is regularly drunk cannot say, *I cannot help myself, I'm an alcoholic*, and expect to enter the kingdom;

The Christian who flirts with married spouses of the opposite sex cannot say, *It's all in innocence*, and expect to enter the kingdom—

The listing could go on for pages, but what is important to remember is that the standard for behavior set by the man Jesus is the reasonable expectation for every Christian's behavior although none will, prior to the Second Passover liberation of Israel, rise to this standard. However, the expectation is that every Christian will strive to look like the man Jesus in his or her behavior, thereby giving no appearance of evil to man or angel, the reason every woman has a symbol of authority on her head (1 Cor 11:10) and why every man does not (*v.* 4), with hair not being this symbol but only serving as a shadow and type of this symbol.

When a person comes short of the glory of God, the only acceptable response is repentance ... the man who is effeminate—the metro male—and who has always lived in a cosmopolitan manner does not look like Christ Jesus, the Medieval era painting of Jesus notwithstanding, for this man looks and acts like the Adversary whom he faithfully serves as the Adversary's willing slave.

As I have recently written: it is easy to preach repentance, but repentance isn't easy for repentance means killing the inner crucified-but-still-living self and means going to war with the flesh that may well like the finer things of this world, soft conversations, the delicacies of taste and touch, the refinements of city life, a lifestyle constructed on buying and selling, on commerce, on the sale of commodities, annuities, derivatives, investment paper—a lifestyle constructed from the labor of the poor and the interbreeding of currencies.

The temple of God—the Christian Church (from 1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16)—will be cleansed, and all those Christians who have constructed their lives on the labor of others will be purged, beginning with the so-called Christian ministry that has their hands in the pockets of their parishioners ... this brings us back to the Apostle Paul taking up a collection for the saints in Jerusalem without these assemblies first taking care of the poor in their own houses: in the tale of two brothers, one existing in a hut in Kenya and one living luxuriously in the White House, is seen the fault of Christendom, with Sabbatarian disciples smugly faulting greater Christendom for its lawlessness while these endtime Sabbatarians are more than eager to preach Christ to the world but are far less eager to help their derelict brothers who refuse to be helped.

For a couple of months in the fall of 1975, I attended Sabbath services at Spokane, Washington. The congregation, about 300 strong, met in the basement of the Masonic Hall, a rather dark and dreary setting. And I noticed that there was a family there that was ignored by other parishioners. In an effort to be friendly, I went over to the husband and said hello. He didn't seem like he wanted to talk so after a couple of minutes I drifted away, and a deaconess came up to me and said, "God's working with them so we don't have anything to do with them." And I was somewhat speechless: if God was working with them, then with them was where I wanted to be, and I went back over and tried to strike up a

conversation. But it was obvious the man didn't want to talk so I gave up, but never forgot the incident ... a few months later, after I had returned to Alaska, the minister of that congregation shot his wife before committing suicide: the spirit that was in that congregation had manifested itself in deeds.

What happens when we have a brother separated from us by ideology, by distance, or by a derelict lifestyle? Will we go after our brother to try and save him, or will we do as I did when rebuffed that Sabbath day in 1975, go about our business, leaving God to work with the one who will not speak to us or hear us? How much ability do we really have when it comes to intervening? Could President Obama help his half-brother in Kenya without his brother becoming dependant on that help, thereby robbing his brother of initiative and stealing from his brother self-respect? As it was, for the Sabbaths I attended at Spokane I continued to try to engage the fellow in conversation, and just before I left, we were holding still-rather-brief conversations in which I learned a little about his situation.

We are to separate from unbelievers, not from our believing brothers with whom God is working. Wisdom manifests itself by knowing when to intervene and when not to intervene, with "separation" and "non-intervention" not being the same thing.

If we have a brother who is a derelict, who steals from us, who lies to us, who turns our possessions into booze money, what do we do? Are we to turn our backs on him? Or is he to us as we were to Christ Jesus before we received a second breath of life? Which of us has a derelict brother who kills our sons as Saul hunted down and killed the saints before Jesus called him on the road to Damascus? And that is what lawless Christians will do to Sabbatarians in the Affliction so how are we to respond?

Throughout his ministry in Macedonia and Achaia, Paul represented in himself the Christian Church in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE and beyond; for when Paul went to Jerusalem where he was taken and made a prisoner in an unwilling double enslavement to sin [in his flesh] and to unbelief [sin in others], Paul became in his flesh the shadow and copy [the left hand enantiomer] of the Christian Church in its death from the end of the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century to the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century (1900 years), with the one who would build upon *Paul* picking up Paul's work and continuing Paul's ministry to Gentile converts through the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century and to the Second Passover liberation of Israel. The reason Paul went to Jerusalem was to be taken prisoner, which wasn't what he wanted to happen (why Paul writes what he does to the holy ones at Rome). The collection for the saints at Jerusalem was the means through which the glorified Jesus got Paul to plan on going to Jerusalem when it wasn't in Paul's best interest to go but when going was necessary to fulfill Scripture, written as an epistle in Paul's life.

### 3.

If a person were to understand that he or she will affect the future through the things the person does, how should this person behave? Should this person be

doubly careful to walk as Jesus walked, keeping the commandments and doing those things that pertain to being a believer? That would seem reasonable. And how would God respond to this person being careful to walk as Jesus walked?

When the children of Israel were camped on the plains of Moab and not far from entering the Promised Land after the generation, except for Joshua and Caleb, numbered in the census of the second year had perished in the wilderness of Sin/Zin, Moses spoke to those about to enter:

Hear, O Israel: you are to cross over the Jordan today, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves, cities great and fortified up to heaven, a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know, and of whom you have heard it said, "Who can stand before the sons of Anak?" Know therefore today that he who goes over before you as a consuming fire is the Lord your God. He will destroy them and subdue them before you. So you shall drive them out and make them perish quickly, as the Lord has promised you.

*Do not say in your heart, after the Lord your God has thrust them out before you, "It is because of my righteousness that the Lord has brought me in to possess this land," whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is driving them out before you. Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the Lord your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.*

Know, therefore, that the Lord your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn people. Remember and do not forget how you provoked the Lord your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the Lord. (Deut 9:1–9 emphasis added)

It wasn't because of the children of Israel's righteousness that they received the Promised Land, but because of the wickedness of its existing inhabitants. It wasn't because of the righteousness of Gentiles that they were grafted onto the Root of Righteousness, but because of the wickedness of the children of Israel (Rom 11:11). And it will not be because of the righteousness of the third part of humankind that those children of men enter into God's rest, but because of the wickedness of the greater Christian Church.

What Paul was too close in time to fully appreciate was the *unbelief* that continued to reside in the holy ones in Jerusalem and throughout Macedonia and Achaia, unbelief analogous to unbelief that caused the last Elijah to cease to breathe His breath into the dead Body of Christ in the 16<sup>th</sup>-Century and in the 20<sup>th</sup>-Century, thereby purging from the temple [the Body of Christ] the spiritual livestock, merchants, and moneychangers through the dead, having sampled the goodness of God, returning to being *dead* but now with no hope of another

resurrection to life. Such are those Sabbatarian disciples who have bit into the Sacred Names Heresy in the early 21<sup>st</sup>-Century: they were dead, but then had life breathed into them by the last Elijah. However, in placing emphasis on the flesh and on the things of the flesh such as the pronunciation of oral utterances, they are spiritually today as the holy ones in Jerusalem physically were when stricken by drought and famine—when the Second Passover liberation of Israel occurs, they will not live again for they have already sampled the goodness of God [indwelling eternal life] and they did not value it or treat it as a thing to be honored, but instead placed honor on a Hebrew pronunciation that they cannot make. Thus, they are famished, perishing in their physicality. And once the Affliction begins, the saints will errantly mount a relief convoy in a vain attempt to recover some of them when none of them can be returned to life.

Paul had to go to Jerusalem where he would be taken prisoner. The collection of foodstuffs was the means used to get him to Jerusalem, but any means would have sufficed. As it was, Christ Jesus used Paul's own good intentions [the sacred], coupled to his belief that Gentile converts owed to Jewish converts material support [the profane] to reveal sin that didn't simply lurk in Paul's flesh but remained concealed in his heart. This is not to say that Paul, like Peter, will not be considered "great" in the kingdom of God—both will be called great—but is to say that all of the holy ones still have clay feet. No exceptions.

Today, endtime disciples, if they listen to the voice of Christ Jesus, will be self-aware texts, realizing that those things which they do affects the future. As a result, they need to be doubly careful to walk as Jesus walked. They need to consider how those things they do will appear to others [men and angels]. They need to speak with wisdom and act with discretion. The bar they set by their words and deeds will be the standard that the holy ones in the Endurance rise-to and will be the standard used in the Millennium. And those Christians who treat salvation as if it were unionized employment will have a very difficult time making it into the kingdom.

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