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Commentary — From the Margins *That Decree of Election*

When Herbert Armstrong's Worldwide Church of Church sought academic accreditation for its Ambassador College [University] campuses, the church's colleges lacked adequate numbers of terminally degreed faculty members to withstand critical scrutiny. Thus, the church administration sent in-house educated faculty members to various universities to obtain graduate degrees. And apparently, these faculty members' *Ambassador College education* had not adequately prepared them to sift through the theological chaff of *Dispensationalism*, of Reformed Covenant Theology, of the plethora of doctrines and dogmas that developed after the close of the 1st-Century CE. As a result, the lawlessness that sent the early Church into exile in spiritual Babylon entered the WCG, thereby splitting a still-standing dead snag that had been ringed by prophetic misunderstandings decades earlier...there are only so many times a person, or an institution can get prophecy wrong before the person or institution is properly labeled a false prophet, and Armstrong's WCG specialized in getting prophecy wrong.

Although Armstrong's WCG never understood spiritual birth and taught that disciples would be glorified as "baby gods," an incredibly serious false teaching that precludes anyone holding that doctrine from ever understanding biblical prophecy, the organization did realize that human beings are not born with immortal souls, but must receive life in the heavenly realm through spiritual birth. Unfortunately, the organization considered the model of human birth beginning with Cain as the model for spiritual birth; thus, it taught that when a spiritually lifeless person is drawn by the Father (John 6:44), the person was *begotten* by the Holy Spirit as an ovum is fertilized in the womb of a woman. It then taught that birth would occur when the disciple was glorified; that the time between conception and birth was the natural lifetime of the disciple; that the WCG served as the womb of the mother in nourishing the disciple. Thus, extrapolating on this teaching, Christ Jesus at the wedding supper will marry a collection of bawling infants, none of whom will have yet suckled spiritual milk.

Armstrong's teaching about spiritual birth was nonsense, yet his teaching is continued by the splintered splinters of the former WCG.

The model for spiritual birth was that of the first and last Adam; for human women carry fetus in their wombs, not suckling children or adolescents able to eat meat. Spiritual birth isn't about being begotten by the Holy Spirit, but about receiving spiritual life in what was the previous moment a spiritually lifeless corpse. The first Adam didn't look like a red mud pie when *Elohim* [singular in usage] breathed into his nostrils; he looked like an adult man. He didn't look like an infant, or an unviable mass of elemental atoms. Likewise, the last Adam was a living, breathing human being—the man Jesus of Nazareth—when the divine Breath [*Pneuma*] of the Father descended upon Him as a dove. The last Adam wasn't a bawling infant when He received the Breath of the Father. He was about thirty years old (the first Adam would have been about twenty years old [the justification for this statement is in other writings]). And immediately after the dove lit and remained on Jesus, the Father declared that Jesus was His beloved Son (Matt 3:16-17).

At thirty, Jesus was old enough to serve as a priest in natural Israel if He had been born a Levite. He, however, was born of the tribe of Judah, as a descendant of King David. Nothing was said about a man of Judah serving in the priesthood—so, as the first Adam was given birth outside of the garden of God, Jesus was given spiritual birth outside of natural temple service. The first Adam was placed in the garden and commanded to dress it by *Elohim* [singular] (Gen 2:15); the last Adam was placed over the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16-17) by the Father.

Jesus was baptized by John to *fulfill all righteousness* (Matt 3:15), and the righteousness that must be fulfilled was the creation of the model for spiritual birth...Jesus had no need to be baptized for repentance; He was sinless. Yet every other human being, consigned to disobedience by God (Rom 11:32), has sinned (Rom 5:12) and is in need of repentance—and the sin of every other person wasn't the sin of the first Adam (*v.* 14), but the person's own lawlessness from being consigned to disobedience so that God could have mercy on the person.

There are no exceptions given for God's giving of mercy. One person isn't predestined to receive mercy, and another predestined to burn in the lake of fire. God is not a respecter of persons. But just because God gives mercy to all doesn't mean that all will value that mercy enough to walk uprightly before Him. Rather, the evidence of history is that most disciples have not valued this mercy enough to spurn hypocrisy, and attempt to walk blamelessly before God. Pharisees were hypocrites (Matt chap 23). And if a disciple's righteousness doesn't exceed that of the Pharisees, who had the law of God and didn't keep it (John 7:19), the disciple will in no way enter the kingdom of God (Matt 5:20).

Disciples have the laws of God written on their hearts and placed in their minds; they know what is right. They know to keep the ways and commandments of God. Thus, when they spurn these commandments, they are hypocrites. They will not enter the kingdom of heaven even though God has had mercy on them. They preclude themselves from entering the kingdom by embracing lawlessness.

Predestination must be perceived from the perspective of the timeless heavenly realm, where the present moment remains regardless of the activity occurring. Thus, from this timeless perspective, the resurrection has already occurred even though it remains ahead of humanity in the time continuum within the physical universe. This is why the *Logos*, as *Theos*, could see Satan fall like lightening before He entered His creation as His son, His only (John 3:16), the man Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:1-2, 14). The *Logos* didn't come as the son of *Theon*. He wasn't the Son of *Theon* until *Theon's* Breath descended upon Him as a dove. And Satan doesn't fall like lightening until cast from heaven (Rev 12:9-10) when the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High [*Theon*] and of His Christ [*Theos*] (Rev 11:15 & Dan 7:9-14). This occurs halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation. But from the perspective of the heavenly realm, the end is already known: the Father and the Son know who has been glorified before these saints are resurrected and their judgments revealed—and from heaven these saints can watch themselves, each of them on earth in the cloak of Christ Jesus' righteousness (i.e., Grace), work out their salvation.

The problem that early Church fathers encountered—those disciples who gain control of the Church excluded women from decision making, their exclusion based

upon the interior plumbing of the tent of flesh in which these sons of God temporarily dwelt, so the 2nd-Century Church became a lawless patriarchy—was their inability to comprehend the timelessness of the heavenly realm. They should have realized that time was solely an attribute of the physical Creation, for they believed that “heaven” was beyond the stars, their instruments for the measurement of time. But when rereading the record left by these Church fathers, a person realizes that these theologians were incapable of visualizing the heavenly realm. And even today, visual learners (as opposed to the 5% of population that are audible learners) have an exceedingly difficult time in grasping the potential of timelessness. Heaven, however, is the supra-dimension from which the four unfurled dimensions originate. It might be conceived as the point on the apex of a two-dimensional parabola from which every other point along the parabola is visible in both directions. The passage of time occurs along the surface of the parabola, with the decay of dark matter extending the ends of the parabola. Thus, if this point at the apex is the tangent of another dimension or dimensions, an observer in this other dimension[s] would know the end of a matter from its beginning, for both points would be observable along the surface of the parabola...the observer would be like a person standing on the bank of a small farm pond, able to see both the inlet and outlet of the pond as well as the weeds, snails, crayfish, fish in the pond. All activity within the pond would be observable without the person moving. Thus, it would be like time stood still for the person if the person paused long to watch the activity of life within the pond.

Jesus is the light that came from darkness (2 Cor 4:6) that formed the first day of the Genesis chapter one creation account [the “P” account]. He is the last Adam, made alive when the Breath of the Father descended upon Him as a dove; He is the first to be born with both the Breath of *Theos*, received when He breathed into the nostrils of the first Adam, and the Breath of *Theon*, whom the world did not know, or even know about until He came to reveal the Father. Jesus was the first to be born-from-above, or born again, or born of Spirit. As such, He is the reality that the first Adam foreshadows in the so-called “J” creation account—and in the “J” creation story that begins with Genesis 2:4, Adam is created before plants are created. The last Adam is created before any other physically breathing person is born of Spirit.

A physically breathing human being is a spiritual corpse, just as the first Adam was made into a lifeless human corpse before receiving the breath of life. Human beings had no life in the heavenly realm prior to the creation of the last Adam. To say otherwise is to deny that the first Adam was the first human being, and this denial is the acknowledged position held by atheists and by certain Christianity Identity cults that have only the “white” races descending from Adam, and the darker races being “mud-people” or “sons of Satan.” Atheists deserve some credit for being reasoning people, for they have not yet been born of Spirit so they cannot know God, but must necessarily be hostile to God (Rom 8:7). Christian racists, however, deserve no credit for their ignorance; they are without excuse. They are dishonest with Scripture, and they are hate-filled people.

On the second day of creation, the waters of humanity are divided between those individuals who have been born-from-above and those not yet so born. This division, foreshadowed by the division of humanity made with hands (i.e., physical circumcision), began when the last Eve, created when Jesus breathed on ten of His disciples and said,

Receive the Holy Spirit [Pneuma 'Agion] (John 20:22), becomes the reality of the first Eve, who was made from the flesh and bone of the first Adam. The last Eve, created from the wound in the side of Jesus of Nazareth, this wound made while He was on the cross at Calvary, is a spiritual creation, and is composed of all disciples who have the Spirit or Breath of Christ (Rom 8:9) as well as the Spirit or Breath of the One who raised Jesus from the dead (v. 11). Two Breaths, not one. The last Eve has the *Pneuma of Theos*, born as the man Jesus, as well as the *Pneuma of Theon*, whom physically circumcised Israel never knew. And early Church fathers, in their profound ignorance, could not understand spiritual birth any better than Nicodemus could—and Jesus chided Nicodemus for his lack of understanding. Nicodemus lacked having the Holy Spirit. So how much more will Jesus chide early theologians for attempting to teach spiritual Israel what they couldn't comprehend?

Because of the lawlessness of the early theologians, the Father and Son allowed the Church to divide into a southern school at Alexandria, and a northern school at Ephesus, just as the physically circumcised nation divided into the southern house of Judah, with Jerusalem as its capital, and the northern house of Israel, with Samaria as its capital. Then, the northern school was exiled to spiritual Assyria, the representation of death: Arian Christianity all but disappears after the Vandals withdraw from Rome. It doesn't reappear until the 19th-Century in North America, when organizations such as the Latter Day Saints, the Jehovah Witnesses, and the Sacred Names Assemblies identify the Son as being a created entity like the archangel Michael prior to the Son's human birth. These fellowships inevitably identify the tetragrammaton *YHWH* as the singular God the Father, thereby revealing how little they understand Christology. They will, however, prevail against the descendants of the school of Alexandria when they align themselves with the endtime spiritual king of North.

The southern school of Alexandria was, for lawlessness that exceeded the iniquity of its northern sister, exiled to spiritual Babylon, where it was to serve the king of disobedience, the prince of the power of the air. This exile was made official at the Council of Nicea (ca. 325 CE). Therefore, the theological creeds drafted by spiritual Israel in spiritual Babylon have the holy nation of God bowing and paying homage to the reality of the golden statute of King Nebuchadnezzar. None of them are of God. All of them are of the Adversary. So for endtime Christians to look to what, say, Augustine wrote three-quarters of a century after Israel was sent to Babylon is akin to asking the old serpent how best to worship him.

Twelve centuries after Father and Son exiled spiritual Israel to Babylon, a remnant of the spiritually circumcised nation left the Chaldean capital to rebuild the house of God in the Jerusalem above, a city without inhabitants. This remnant, like the remnant that left physical Babylon under Sheshbazzar, prince of Judah (Ezra 1:8), received the treasure of the Jerusalem above that was stored in the treasury of Babylon—vessels and bowls that the holy nation of God had not been able to use since being sent into exile. The spiritual nation had the Scriptures returned to it. So again in possession of the Scriptures, this remnant set off on its journey to the Land Beyond the River.

The remnant of physically circumcised Israel that left physical Babylon journeyed over physical geography to return to the Jerusalem below. But the remnant of the spiritually circumcised nation that left spiritual Babylon journeyed over the mental

topography of humanity to reach a particular philosophical location—and the journey of this remnant is tracked through its teachings, beginning with the necessity of adult baptism. The Anabaptists led this remnant out of Babylon and across the deserts of Chaldea...my relatives, both sides, were in this remnant. My mother was a Howland, a direct descendant from John Howland, a signer of the *Mayflower Compact*. My father's ancestry goes back to Derek Keyser, buried in Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1703, one of the first German Anabaptists in America. So this journey of a remnant of spiritual Israel to the Jerusalem above was my journey long before I knew that such a trek had been undertaken.

When the remnant of spiritually circumcised Israel entered the Land Beyond the River Jordan can be determined by when this remnant returned to keeping the Sabbath, the 7th-day rest of God that is the mental or spiritual equivalent to entering Judea.

The nation that left Egyptian bondage could not enter God's rest (Ps 95:10-11) because of its unbelief (Heb 3:19). It acknowledged its sin before God, then rebelled against God by attempting to enter His rest the following day (Num 14:40-41)...liberated in its mind from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2) that still, though, dwelt in its flesh (Rom 7:25), the spiritual nation of Israel mentally rebelled against God because of its unbelief, this rebellion being disobedience to the laws of God. This spiritual nation, then, attempted to enter God's rest on the following day, the 8th-day. It could not. And it cannot today.

The physical nation of Israel was not given God's rest when this nation was exiled to Babylon. Rather, it was told to pray for the welfare of Babylon, that in this peace or welfare it would find its peace (Jer 29:4-7). Thus, the 8th-day is of Babylon, and is a sign of rebellion against God. So when, in 1660, seven members of the First Baptist Church of Newport, Rhode Island, began to observe the Sabbath on the 7th-day; when Anabaptists in the Ephrata Cloister, under Conrad Beissel, and Anabaptists elsewhere returned to keeping the 7th-day Sabbath, the remnant leaving spiritual Babylon finally crossed the Jordan.

But most of the remnant that left Babylon built spiritual houses for themselves along the way: this is especially true of the followers of Menno Simons. They started well, but the journey was too far for them, the hardships too many. Thus, before they crossed the River Jordan, they settled down to farm the vast wastelands in what would spiritually be western Iraq, Syria, Jordan. They got close to God's rest, but until they begin keeping the Sabbath, they will remain on the wrong side of the river of life.

The journey of the remnant that left Babylon passes through the Seventh Day Baptists, and on to the Church of God, 7th-day, with detours through the Seventh Day Adventists and through Armstrong's WCG. But the house of God in the Jerusalem above wasn't getting completed: as with the remnant of the natural nation, the returning exiles were in great trouble and shame (Neh 1:3). The children of these returning exiles were [are] seeing the lights of Babylon across the desert, and heading back to that doomed city where grandparents had built houses, and had prospered as the city had prospered.

Because the remnant of spiritual Israel now in God's rest never satisfactorily answered four basic questions, this remnant remains a discredited point on parabolic time. The questions are:

- If God intended for all men to be saved, would He not have equally furnished all with the same opportunity to accept salvation?
- Has sufficient grace been granted to all heathens to bring them to salvation?
- If conversion comes from accepting Christ Jesus as one's personal savior, why does Scripture speak of new birth as being the work of God through His Spirit?
- Why are many seemingly "good" people not Christians while the wretched of the world are called?

The answers are found in typology, and with typological exegesis:

1. All men will be born by the Breath of *Theon* as the firstfruits are now. But the mass of humanity, like the maincrop wheat harvest of the hills of God's rest, physical Judea, will receive a second birth when resurrected from the dead, for all who have drawn breath will be resurrected. All are either part of the early barley harvest, gathered into the barns of God when Christ Jesus returns, or of the later wheat harvest, gathered into the barns during the great White Throne Judgment. All will have one chance for salvation—there will be no second chances. The person who receives the second birth [birth from the Breath of *Theon*] prior to physical death must overcome Satan while this son of God dwells in a tent of flesh. The person who receives this second birth in the general resurrection of the dead will be judged by those things done while alive: this person will be like one or the other of the two thieves crucified with Jesus at Calvary. If this person seeks to save his or her physical life, which the person unknowingly [because the person entered timelessness at death] lost, the person will forever perish. If this person acknowledges that he was worthy of death and calls on the Lord for salvation, the person will, that day, be in paradise with Christ Jesus.
2. Grace is the garment of Christ Jesus' righteousness given to the firstfruits who have been unwillingly drawn from the world to be special vessels (in that they are first, as a person born out of season) intended for God's use. Thus, grace is not necessary when Satan is removed as the prince of the power of the air (i.e., as the ruler of the mental topography of humanity). Grace will not be needed by those individuals who receive the second birth in the general resurrection of the dead, for no sin is now imputed to them: they are not under either the external [written by the finger of *Theos* on stone tablets], or the internal [written by the Breath of *Theon* on tablets of flesh] laws of God. They are as all human beings were prior to the giving of the law at Sinai (Rom 5:12-14).
3. No person can come to the Father unless first drawn by the Father (John 6:44, 65) through receipt of His Breath. Therefore, it is foolishness to speak of accepting Jesus as one's personal savior. That option is not the person's. Rather, the person has the option of accepting judgment upon him or herself by being baptized into the household of God, or rejecting judgment and inclusion in the first resurrection. The person will only come under judgment once, so rejecting judgment and inclusion into the household of God will leave the person being judged in the general resurrection.

All of the drawing and calling belongs to the Father and the Son, and this work is done through the Breath of each. No flesh can enter the supra-dimensional heavenly realm, so no one first comes to God.

4. Those individuals who are called to be firstfruits are called for reasons known to the Father. Their calling is His prerogative—and He draws for a particular position [*topos*] that needs filled in His household. He figuratively hires whom He wants for the jobs or offices He has available in every age, and as part of the Son of Man which will rule the kingdom of the world when Babylon has served is usefulness and its king is deposed.

O foolish Puritan! How can you so despise the sons and daughters of the first Adam that you would condemn them to an ever-burning Gehenna fire because their election is not today?

A person mocks the Father and the Son when the person makes both out to be respecters of persons, favoring the Englishman or German or American over the Asian or African or Indian, who for centuries never heard the name Jesus of Nazareth, the name by which all of humanity will be saved. This blasphemy against the Father and Son will be forgiven; however, when the Church is empowered by the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the seven endtime years of tribulation, the person who has been born by the Breath of *Theon* will be made spiritually naked before God. The garment of grace will be laid aside, for it will no longer be necessary. The disciple will be liberated from sin and death as the natural nation of Israel was liberated from physical bondage to Pharaoh—and as this natural nation rebelled against God because of its unbelief, the spiritual nation of Israel will also rebel because of its unbelief, manifest weekly by the day upon which it attempts to enter God's rest. Instead of keeping the Sabbath as the diminutive form of God's rest (Heb 4:9), the greater Christian Church today weekly enters the peace of spiritual Babylon. Once liberated, this returning to Babylon will cost every disciple his or her spiritual life, for this will be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

It isn't to Augustine that a disciple should look for knowledge about the election of saints, but to Christ Jesus, whom Augustine did not know other than as a name he once heard.

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