

Commentary — From the Margins

“The Fig Tree”

On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. And he said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard it. ... As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. And Peter remembered and said to him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered.” And Jesus answered them, “Have faith in God. Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, *whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.* (Mark 11:12–14, 20–24 emphasis added)

1.

The ugliest lie Christendom tells the world is there’s only one day of salvation, that everyone who doesn’t accept Jesus in this life is doomed to hell where the immortal soul of the person withers in pain and agony forever, scorched by flames not quite hot enough to consume the person ... this is a truly horrible lie that besmirches the Father and the Son. It is of the devil, of Greek paganism, and of your local Christian pastor who visibly appears as a servant of righteousness. But ask yourself, why would you willingly worship a deity devoted to torture? You would only worship such a deity out of fear, right? And what kind of a deity needs worship derived from fright? Certainly not one worthy of being worshiped; hence, the lie is told that the soul after death cannot perish but remains alive in pain, great pain, unbearable pain, to compel worship of demons in this life — it is no wonder that human beings increasingly reject visible Christendom, as they should.

When Adam in the Garden of God ate forbidden fruit, he lost his “covering” of obedience (he was Eve’s covering); he realized he was naked, and he and Eve made for themselves loincloths of fig leaves. Adam and Eve used fig leaves to cover her “blossom” and his “seed” as the perceived fruit of the fig covers its blossom and seed, a juxtaposition to which we will return.

There is a Creator, despite speculations to the contrary by many learned men and women who are appalled that anyone could worship a mass torturer, how

they perceive the God of Christianity, little realizing they have only heard the lies of the Adversary. This Creator was and is the spokesman for the Most High; this spokesman was God and served as the helpmate (wife) for the Most High God, as Eve was the helpmate of Adam, with Adam and Eve together forming in marriage one flesh as this Creator and the Most High formed one deity represented by the tetragrammaton *YHWH*. It was by this helpmate that the first Adam received the breath of life and became the first living entity, not what either visible Christendom or the scientific community teaches but what is recorded in Scripture; for the Genesis chapter one creation account, the so-called “P” account, is not about a physical creation but a spiritual creation. Ask yourself what is excluded (or not created) from the following declarative statement: “In the beginning, God [*Elohim*] created [*bara*] the heavens and the earth” (Gen 1:1)? Is any part of the heavens excluded? No? Is any part of the earth excluded? No? Is the sun excluded? Is plant life excluded? Is the first Adam excluded, considering that the first Adam is given life on “the day that the Lord God [*YHWH Elohim*] made the earth and the heavens” (Gen 2:4)? The first Adam isn’t excluded, is he? The first Adam is created on the dark portion of Day One — and the last Adam is the light of Day One (2 Cor 4:6).

The Adam created in the dark portion of Day One serves as the revealing shadow and type of the last Adam, the man Jesus of Nazareth (*cf.* Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:45), with the physical maturation of the sons of Adam serving as the informing shadow and type of the spiritual maturation of the sons of God, of which Jesus of Nazareth was the First of these firstborn sons. Thus the creation of the heavens and earth referenced in Genesis 1:1 forms the shadow and type—the chiral image of—the creation of the new heavens and new earth; for as Adam was the first living entity created in the “J” account (Gen 2:4 through chapter 4), with Adam made on the day when the heavens and earth were formed, the creation of sons of men in the image and likeness of God are the last entities created in the “P” account.

In the relationship between the two creation accounts [the so-called “J” account addressing the creation of the physical man Adam, and the “P” account addressing the creation of the last Adam and His seed] is the expression of the relationship between *Yah* and *YHWH*, with King David disclosing in the thought-couplets of his later poetry (psalms) his understanding of this relationship ... the mythical *Key of David*, a key that opens all of Scripture, gives understanding of the relationship between darkness and light, between physical and spiritual, between shadow and living reality. Hence David writes, in the natural presentation of his thought to praise God, “Praise *Yah*,” and then in the spiritual presentation of the same thought, “Praise *YHWH*, O my soul” (Ps 146:1 — *cf.* Ps 148:1; 149:1). In the thought-couplet, *Yah* bears to *YHWH* a relationship analogous to that of the first Adam to the last Adam, as well as the relationship night bears to day (the entire 24 hour period). “Night” doesn’t exist apart from day, but is that portion of “day” that is without light. Jesus as the life and light of men (John 1:4) brought life to the sons of Adam as the sun brings light to darkness. Hence it is just as wrong to worship the sun (i.e., the creation) as it is wrong to not worship the Son (i.e., the Creator); for the light cast by the sun is the lifeless shadow and type of the light/life cast by the living Son.

The Apostle John begins his gospel with the assertion that the *Logos* [ὁ λόγος] was God [θεός] and was with [πρὸς] the God [τὸν θεόν] in the beginning (John 1:1), making God [θεός] not the name of a solitary deity but the descriptive identifier of the highest-order, non-physical genus—a genus with fig-like characteristics; i.e., characteristics of both the common fig and the Smyrna fig.

The Apostle Paul reveals his understanding of the inherent duality of two creations when he writes, “For his [God’s] invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made” (Rom 1:18), and “But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual” (1 Cor 15:46).

But it is in Moses and in Jesus where the fullness of the dark/light metaphor used for the two creations is expressed: when addressing Jews seeking to kill Him, Jesus said,

You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Not that the testimony that I receive is from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. I do not receive glory from people. But I know that you do not have the love of God within you. I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him. How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?” (John 5:33–47)

Moses records, “Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel ... they beheld God, and ate and drank” (Ex 24:9–11). After wrestling with God, Jacob says, “For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered” (Gen 32:30). All of Israel at Sinai heard the voice of the God [θεός — from Matt 22:32] of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Thus, if Jesus is to be believed, the Creator (i.e., the God of Abraham) was not the Father, the Lord of Hosts, whom Jesus as His shepherd stood next to (*cf.* Matt 26:31; Zech 13:7), making the Lord of Hosts not the Creator of all-that-has-been-made, but the Ancient of Days (Dan 7:9–14), and making *the Theos* [ὁ θεός] who entered His creation as His only Son (John 3:16) the *Logos/Yah*. Hence, the *Logos/Yah* was God to physically circumcised Israel as the Father is God to spiritually circumcised Israel, with the Father and the Son

presently one God as they were one God when the relationship was analogous to marriage rather than that of a father and his eldest son. The testimony of the Apostle John is that the Father and the Son are of one house named “God/θεὸς.”

Is it coincidence that “John bore witness to the truth,” with another *John* bearing witness to the Truth ... Jesus told Pilate, “You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my words” (John 18:37).

About John the Baptist, Luke records,

Now while he [Zechariah] was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty ... there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.” (1:8, 11–13)

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ... And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, but his mother answered, “No; he shall be called John.” And they said to her, “None of your relatives is called by this name.” And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And they all wondered. And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be?” For the hand of the Lord was with him. (1:57, 59–66)

John the Baptist was named by the Lord to be the type and shadow of John, the apostle whom Jesus loved and the apostle chosen to bear witness to the truth as given by Jesus, and by Paul who laid the foundation for the house of God (1 Cor 3:10–11), and by Peter, chosen to feed the lambs, shepherd the sheep and feed the sheep, the work Peter does in his two epistles where Peter testifies that Paul’s epistles are of God.

There are not gospels or epistles from all twelve disciples ... it might be not all twelve were literate or were fluent writers, but more likely some of the twelve were the influential men at Jerusalem that came from James and formed the Circumcision Faction (Gal 2:12). Understand, the Circumcision Faction had Scripture on its side: Moses commanded Israel,

And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the statute of the Passover: no foreigner shall eat of it, but every slave that is bought for money may eat of it after you have circumcised him. ... If a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised

person shall eat of it. There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you.” (Ex 12:43–44, 48–49)

According to Moses as the mediator of the Passover covenant made on the day when the Lord took Israel by the hand to lead the nation out of Egypt, a Gentile convert—a proselyte—would have to be physically circumcised to be numbered among those who are called Israel and who can eat the Passover; for there shall not be one law (covenant) for Gentiles sojourning among Israel and another law for Israel as *dispensationalists* today teach. No one was to take the Passover who was not circumcised. And the prophet Ezekiel, addressing the period when David is again king over Israel, goes even farther, saying, “Thus says the Lord God [*Adoni YHWH*]: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary” (44:9), so the bar is raised. Once the Son of Man begins to rule over humankind, everyone who enters the sanctuary must be physically as well as spiritually circumcised. Therefore, it was reasonable for the Circumcision Faction to conclude that throughout this era, those Gentile converts who would enter the spiritual sanctuary must be physically circumcised ... no! it wasn't. A spiritual sanctuary is not a physical sanctuary. When David is again king over Israel, the third temple will be among men. There will again be a physical sanctuary. And it is reasonable to require a physical Israelite to be physically circumcised when entering a physical sanctuary, but it is unreasonable to expect a physical Gentile to be physically circumcised to enter a spiritual sanctuary after this former son of disobedience is circumcised of heart.

The Circumcision Faction was wrong! even though the Faction had Moses and the Prophets on its side.

What the Circumcision Faction never understood was that the physical first temple formed a shadow and copy (Heb 8:5) of the spiritual second temple that went from being a physical building (the equivalent to the dark portion of a day) to being the body/Body of Christ when Jesus rebuilt the temple in three days (the rebuilt temple equivalent to the hot or light portion of the day). Paul understood this correspondence, which is why he writes, “Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple” (1 Cor 3:16–17), and “What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God” (2 Cor 6:16).

John, testifying of the truth, records,

The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade.” ... So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will

you raise it up in three days?” But he was speaking about the temple of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

The above occurs in the first year of Jesus’ three and a half year long ministry: three years later would be the jubilee year, and the temple was “released” from being lifeless stone to become a building of “living stones” (1 Pet 2:5), with Christ Jesus being both the cornerstone [the beginning] and the capstone [the end].

As Israel ceased being the spiritually lifeless firstborn son of God (Ex 4:22) and became the spiritually living firstborn son of the Most High, with Christ Jesus being the First of these firstborn sons of God, the temple ceased being a lifeless building and became a living structure that will become a living city when glorified disciples return. Glorified disciples will form New Jerusalem, a city of pure gold, clear as glass (Rev 21:18).

Living stone in this era becomes gold clear as glass when the new heaven and new earth come here, thus disclosing that the present earth and present heavens are merely lifeless shadows and types of living realities as night is the dark portion of day—and as John the Baptist, the greatest of all men born of Woman [the first Eve], was a shadow and type of the Apostle John, who outlived his peers and actually was in vision on the Lord’s day, that day when the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Father and the Son (Rev 1:10; 11:15), the day when the prophet Daniel saw the throne of the Ancient of Days and saw dominion over the kingdoms of this world given to one like a Son of Man (7:9–14). Therefore, the Apostle John lives before us in the flesh and lives after us (where we presently are in time) in the spirit. John becomes the human bracket that encloses all of the Christian era, the bracket that testifies to the Truth.

2.

The spiritual harvest of firstfruits at Christ Jesus’ return [the Second Advent] is to the main crop harvest of humankind in the great White Throne Judgment as John the Baptist was to the Apostle John, or as the early barley harvest of Judean hillsides (the harvest that began with the Wave Sheaf Offering and ran forward seven weeks until the Feast of Weeks) was to the later main crop wheat harvest (the harvest gathered into barns just before Sukkoth). And disciples see this dark to light relationship in the Feast of Weeks’ offering: “You shall bring from your dwelling places two loaves of bread to be waved, made of two tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour, and they shall be baked with leaven, as firstfruits of the Lord” (Lev 23:17) ...

In typology, leaven [yeast] represents sin.

Jesus was resurrected from death after three days and He ascended to the Father on the morrow after the weekly Sabbath that occurred during the seven days of Unleavened Bread; He ascended to the Father as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering (Lev 23:10–11). He was the first handful of barley to be harvested, and with His acceptance, the barley harvest could begin—and with the waving of the two loaves of bread baked from fine barley flour, baked with sin, the harvest of firstfruits ends, with the end of this harvest also represented by the last high Sabbath of Unleavened bread, the high day representing Christ Jesus’ return,

thus compressing the harvest of firstfruits into the seven days of Unleavened Bread now representing the seven endtime years of tribulation. Disciples as the spiritual Body of Christ will also be “waved” before the Father as Jesus was *waved and accepted* when He was resurrected after three days, with these three days being for the Body of Christ the first three days of the “P” creation account, thereby making the creation of the greater light on the fourth day the resurrection to glory of those disciples who will be called great in the kingdom of the heavens (the plural “heavens” is correct), and the creation of the lesser light the glorification of those disciples who will be called least in the kingdom.

As “yeast” is killed by the baking of the loaves so that no sin remains, the glorification of disciples kills any remaining sin, but as the evidence of the yeast’s action remains in the puffiness of the waved loaves, the work of sin will alter the shape of the glorified disciple so it behooves every disciple to sin not at all.

Two tithes of an ephah of fine barley (not wheat) flour suggest that numbered among the firstfruits of God is a tithe of Gentile converts and a tithe of natural Israelites that belong to the Lord. This really does not bode well for Christianity or for Judaism. But when surveying either Christianity or Judaism today, a person will wonder if a tithe can be found, such is the spiritual state of both theologies.

But this sad state of Christianity and Judaism comes from not understanding the cryptic symbolism of Jesus cursing the fig tree: the idea of a two-crop harvest of disciples is inherent in Scripture, with entering into God’s presence or rest represented typologically by both the geography of Judea and by Sabbath observance. Thus, the two grain harvests of Judea—a spring barley harvest and a later, fall wheat harvest—are representative of the two “harvests” of humankind: (1) the harvest of firstfruits upon Christ Jesus’ return, with Jesus being the First of these firstfruits; and (2) the later, main crop harvest of humankind in the great White Throne Judgment. These two harvests of disciples are, therefore, analogous to the two-crop harvest of the fig tree, especially the common fig.

Common fig trees, like a few other fruits (notably raspberries), bear two fruit crops a year, an early breba crop borne on the previous season’s growth, and a second fall crop borne on that season’s growth (on new wood).

Mark records that when Jesus looked for figs, He “found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs” (11:13) ... why would Jesus expect to find figs on the tree when it wasn’t the season for figs? If he didn’t really expect to find figs on the tree, why did He curse the tree? What was to be gained by cursing a tree from which He hadn’t expected to find figs? The tree was being obedient to its nature and to the rhythms of the season and of natural world. What did the tree do that it deserved to be cursed, wither, and die?

There are some learned and some *spiritual* individuals in endtime Western culture that abhor Christianity and Judaism and the deity they present to the world. These individuals will not worship a jealous God (Ex 34:14), for jealousy is not a “good thing,” not something that will bring human beings together in peace and harmony. These individuals want to heal rifts between men and women everywhere, bringing peace where there presently is no peace and safety to those presently in danger. They were told that the kingdom of God is here on earth in the form of the Christian Church, and they are intelligent enough to see that if

Christianity represents the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, they want nothing to do with this deity. But they have believed a lie, a clever lie, but nonetheless a lie. Yet they see the arbitrary act of Jesus cursing the fig tree as *prima facie* evidence that Christianity has nothing to offer them. So unless Jesus cursed the fig tree (with the fig tree serving as a symbol for human beings) to make a point about discipleship, there was no reason for Him to do what He did.

Fig leaves covered Adam and Eve's nakedness, making Adam like the parent tree of the common fig.

For those who are not familiar with fig culture, fig blossoms are not showy like apricot or apple blossoms. They are tiny, and they are hidden out of sight. They are clustered inside the green fruits (*synconium*). Pollinating insects gain access to the flowers through an opening at the apex of these green fruits—and in the case of the common fig the blossoms are female and need no pollination to produce fruit ... what is generally recognized as the fruit is the pulpy mass within a tough rind, not the seeds, making the fig like a strawberry, in that the “fruit” is actually the seeds within the jelly-like flesh. When the blossoms are not pollinated, the many seeds are hollow; whereas when pollinated, the tiny seeds give to dried figs their characteristic nutty flavor.

Enter now the Smyrna fig that must be cross pollinated by a tiny wasp (*Blastophaga psenes*), taking pollen from male caprifigs (figs traditionally fed to livestock) ... as with common figs, Smyrna figs produce many tiny flowers inside female receptacles that ultimately grow into the fleshy fig. The pollinating wasp is born in a caprifig male receptacle, mates, and moves into another fig receptacle to lay eggs where it dies. When these wasps leave the male caprifig receptacles they are covered with pollen. A percentage of these wasps will enter the receptacle of an edible female cultivar, lay eggs, and effectively fertilize the female flowers there. They and their eggs will be absorbed into the fruit whereas they are not absorbed by a caprifig male receptacle, thus limiting the wasp's reproduction to only male syconia.

The common fig is a unisex female tree, produced by the mutation of a single dominant gene, the process called *parthenocarpy* ... parthenocarpic trees must be propagated by cuttings because they do not produce seeds; they bear sweet fruits without the need for male trees that carry symbiotic fig wasps within their syconia. And as far back as cereal grains were cultivated, parthenocarpic figs trees were propagated by cuttings, making for the reality that every common fig tree has come from a single ancestor as every son of Adam has come from a single ancestor and as every son of God has come from a single ancestor.

When Jesus walked over to the fig tree to look for fruit, that fig tree became a representation of the first Adam and the sons of Adam by being a descendant through cuttings of one ancestral tree.

As a symbol representing the plan of God, the common fig is particularly well suited: the fleshy “fruit” is like the fleshy body of a human being while the real *fruit* is the hidden seeds that cannot of themselves bring forth life; the real life within a disciple is the invisible new creature or self that has come from God. What looks like “fruit” is only the carrier or container for the real fruit. What looks like a disciple of Christ Jesus is only the tent of flesh in which the disciple dwells.

In the symbolism present in the fig, another symbol is at work, that of the early barley harvest and of the Wave Sheaf Offering: again, barley was harvested from Unleavened Bread until the Feast of Weeks [Pentecost]. On the morrow after the Sabbath—with Pharisees understanding the referenced Sabbath to be the great Sabbath of the Sabbath, the 15th day of Abib, and with Sadducees understanding the referenced Sabbath to be the weekly Sabbath that fell within the seven days of Unleavened Bread—the high priest would wave the first handful of ripe barley, indicating that the harvest of firstfruits could begin.

Jesus went to the fig tree to seek fruit before the Wave Sheaf Offering — as previously mentioned, He would be the spiritual reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering when He ascended to the Father on the morrow after the Sabbath and was accepted by the Father, then returned to breathe on ten of His disciples (John 20:22), thereby beginning the harvest of firstfruits ... Jesus sought fruit before the harvest of Israel could begin!

In the stylistic form of a 19th-Century writer, I have to again ask, why would Jesus seek fruit when it was not the season for fruit and when it was unlawful to harvest firstfruits? What did He expect? The fig tree to bear fruit out of season, to bear fruit in darkness—and the answer is, yes, that is exactly what Jesus expects of disciples. As sons of Adam who have been “pollinated” with the Holy Spirit (or given a second breath of life), Jesus expects disciples to produce the fruit of the spirit when He comes to them even though it isn’t the season for fruit and even though the light of this world has not yet returned.

The second Sinai covenant is made with Moses and with Israel, the covenant separating Moses from Israel ... the Lord tells Moses, “I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you” (Ex 32:10). Elsewhere He says, “How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they” (Num 14:11–12).

Moses tries to dissuade God [*Logos/Yah*] from wiping out Israel and making of him a nation greater than Israel—and from Scripture it would seem that Moses has some success, but nowhere in Scripture does the Lord change His mind about making a great nation from Moses, which is why Jesus says, “He [the character Abraham] said to him, “If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead”” (Luke 16:31), with Jesus being the one raised from the dead. Elsewhere Jesus says, “For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words” (John 5:46–47).

Jesus is the prophet about whom Moses wrote (Deut 18:15–19 — *cf.* Deut 32:4, 15–18; Ps 95:1); He is the prophet like Moses, the prophet with whom the Father spoke face-to-face and not in visions or in darkness. Moses is a type of Christ, as disciples are a type and copy of Christ. And as Moses twice lugged two stone tablets inscribed by the finger of God down from atop Sinai, Moses is both separate from, as well as a part of Israel.

Moses enters into God's rest (a euphemism for His presence) atop Mt. Sinai and enters in forty years earlier than the children of Israel enter into God's rest—Moses doesn't enter the Promised Land with the children of Israel who follow Joshua (in Gr: Ἰησοῦ) into the Promised Land as the third part of humankind (Zech 13:9) will follow Jesus (in Gr: Ἰησοῦ) into salvation ... as John the Baptist was given a name to fulfill his role as a shadow of the Apostle John, Moses changed the name of Hoshea, son of Nun (Num 13:16), to *Joshua* so that in Greek Moses' assistant would be a "named shadow" of Christ Jesus when the children of Israel entered the Promised Land.

Examining first Moses being the shadow and type of Christ Jesus before looking further at Joshua as a shadow and type—remember Paul identifies Adam as a shadow and type of Christ Jesus, and what will be found is that all of the patriarchs collectively and individually form a shadow of Christ as disciples individually and collectively form the Body of Christ—as Moses entered into God rest (was given *rest*) forty years before the children of Israel entered, the man Jesus is glorified forty jubilee years (years on which Israel is given release) before the spiritually circumcised children of Israel follow Joshua into God's rest, or into glorify. Joshua is a spiritually lifeless shadow of Jesus as Moses was. But the Lord is making a great nation from Moses, a nation greater than Israel, a nation in which every person is circumcised of heart.

It is this great nation made from Moses that is resurrected to life (not to glory) as the restored but revealed (or made naked) Church at the beginning of the seven endtime years of tribulation.

3.

What the common fig tree highlights is the nature of spiritual birth, of the flesh (tent of flesh) functioning as the visible fruit (syconia) of the fig tree when the real fruit is hidden inside the visible *fruit*. And it is this relationship that Jesus addresses when Nicodemus asks, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born" (John 3:4).

The Hebraic concept represented in English by the word "unclean" might better be rendered as "common," or not chosen, not special, thereby making the *common fig* a representation of a person who has not been born of spirit and circumcised of heart and is thus spiritually *unclean* or *common*, a spiritual Gentile. Nicodemus was in this category when he went to Jesus; he would have been considered a spiritually righteous Gentile, not how he or other Pharisees would have identified him.

Jesus tried to explain receiving a second breath of life to Nicodemus by building on the juxtaposition between the world being baptized into death in the flood of Noah's day and the world being baptized into life when the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα θεοῦ — *breath of God*] is poured out on all flesh (cf. Matt 3:11; Joel 2:28). A person is presently "born of water" when born of the womb of Woman, and as such is flesh and has no spiritual life, no immortal soul, no eternal life, which comes as the gift of God through Christ Jesus (Rom 6:23). The person is spiritually dead even though the person has physical life — as night is the portion of the day without light, without life, human life is without *life*, without *light* until the person has received a second breath of life, with this breath of life coming as

pollination comes to Smyrna figs: outwardly, there is little difference between a common fig and a pollinated Smyrna fig. Inwardly, the seeds of the common fig are without life whereas the seeds of a Smyrna fig carry life within themselves. A human being born of water is as a common fig until the person has received a second breath of life, at which time the person becomes as a Smyrna fig.

In the letter to be delivered to the angel of the church at Smyrna, Christ says, “The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death” (Rev 2:11) ... the one who conquers will have been born of spirit, will have received a second breath of life, for one death is enough to end one life. The second death ends the second life within the person.

Jesus uses word play to make His point about receiving a second breath of life:

Jesus answered [Nicodemus], “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and [πνεύματος—*pneumatōs*], he cannot enter the kingdom of [the] God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the [πνεύματος] is spirit [πνεῦμα]. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind [πνεῦμα] blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit [πνεύματος].” (John 3:5–8)

Wind, deep breath, or any invisible, wind-like force is, in Greek, πνεῦμα; thus the breath of God, an invisible force like that of moving air is πνεῦμα θεοῦ, or the *breath [of] God*, the English word “of” coming from the possessive case ending on “θεοῦ.” And as “wind” and “deep breath” have no sense of personhood associated with the icons, no personhood or sense of personhood should be assigned to πνεῦμα θεοῦ.

But Nicodemus couldn’t understand what Jesus said (Paul says no one can understand spiritual things until born of spirit):

Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “*Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?* Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. (John 3:9–15 emphasis added)

The question Jesus asked Nicodemus about being a teacher of Israel must be asked of every Christian pastor worldwide: if you, Mr. Pastor, cannot understand receiving a second breath of life and instead say silly things about regeneration of an already-possessed immortal soul or silly things about passing a *pin test*, what are you doing setting yourself up as a teacher of Israel? You condemn yourself before the Father and the Son; you condemn yourself before angels and before the Church of God. You are a spiritual murderer! Repent, and pray for forgiveness; for you are today a shill for the Adversary.

When Nicodemus fails to understand spiritual birth, Jesus uses another image, one that should have been at least equally easy to understand ... Jesus twice said that the only sign He would give that He was from heaven was the sign of Jonah:

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. (Matt 12:38–39)

The sign of Jonah is easy to comprehend, right? In Hebrew, there is no linguistic day/night ambiguity: "day" is the hot portion of a 24 hour period, and "night" is the twisting or turning away (from the light). The sign of Jonah as it pertains to Jesus would have Jesus three days and three nights in the heart of the earth as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish (whale). And Jonah now becomes a shadow and type of Christ Jesus.

But Jesus gives the sign of Jonah as the only sign He would give a second time, adding to the sign of Jonah a means of interpreting the sign:

And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So he left them and departed. (Matt 16:1–4)

The sign of Jonah is a sign like that of a red sky, caused by sunlight passing through the atmosphere at a long angle (thereby filtering out the blue spectrum) striking clouds. If this "sign" appears going into darkness, the reading of the sign will have fair weather or calm political winds occurring; whereas if this "sign" appears going into daylight, the weather will be threatening. At its most superficial level, the sign of Jonah will have the physical body of Jesus laying in a grave for three days and three nights, then returning to life after the third day, with darkness settling over earth when Jesus is crucified (John 12:35–36). This application of the sign of Jonah can be likened to a red sky at night.

However, Paul identified disciples individually and collectively as the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27), making Jesus' physical body a shadow and type of the Church, an analogy Paul exploits when he writes that "our old self was crucified with him [Jesus] in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing" (Rom 6:6). Disciples are crucified as Jesus was crucified, and disciples as resurrected as Jesus was resurrected (vv. 6, 11), making the disciple not the fleshly body but the

inner new self born of spirit, for it isn't the fleshly body that is crucified as Jesus was crucified but the old self or nature.

Collectively, the Church is the assembly [ἐκκλησίαν] of new selves which Christ Jesus built on the movement of breath from the masculine name "Peter—Πέτρος" to the genitive case "*petra*—τῆ πέτρα (Matt 16:18).

Again, the sign of Jonah is usually understood to mean the three days and three nights Jesus was in the grave were foreshadowed by the three days and three nights that Jonah was in the belly of the great fish, or whale, but the sign of Jonah is more encompassing than how it is usually taught for Nineveh worshiped Dagon, the fish god, and when spewed forth from the great fish, Jonah was recognized by the inhabitants of Nineveh as a spokesman from their god whereas Jesus was not recognized by Israel as the Spokesman for the Most High God. Therefore, when Jesus first gave Israel the sign of Jonah as the only sign they would see, Jesus also said that the men of Nineveh would rise up with that generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah (Matt 12:39–41).

Although the sign of Jonah pertains physically to Jesus' resurrection from death, the sign spiritually pertains to the movement of breath from the front of the mouth, where the Greek name Πέτρος [*Petros*] is enunciated, to the combined front/middle of the mouth where the Greek word πέτρα [*petra*] is enunciated. This movement of breath is seen in Jesus calling Peter, Σίμων Βαρωνᾶ [*Simon Bar-Jonah*] (Matt 16:17), instead of Σίμων ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωάννου [*Simon the son of John*] (John 1:42) or Σίμων Ἰωάννου [*Simon (of) John*] (John 21:15, 16, 17). The movement of aspiration from in front of the nasal consonant "n" (in Greek, "v") as in the name "John"—this aspiration represented by the consonant "h"—to behind the nasal consonant as in "Jonah" is the portion of the sign of Jonah that has not been well understood by Christendom. The movement of aspiration from the nose to the back of the head represents the movement from physical breath, received from the first Adam into whose nostrils *Elohim* (singular in usage) breathed life (Gen 2:7), to spiritual *breath* [πνευμα], received from the last Adam upon whom the divine breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] lit as a dove and remained (Matt 3:16) ... the dove would have lit on Jesus' head or neck, about where a whale's blow hole is located. Therefore it is upon πέτρα and the movement of aspiration from the puckered lips in the nominative /ος/ masculine case ending of *Petros* to the inside of the mouth in the genitive /α/ case ending of *petra* that Jesus will build and has built His Church; for the one who is of God must be born of water (of the womb) and of spirit (John 3:3–8). Birth by water is represented by breath through the nostrils, while birth by spirit comes by receiving a second breath of life or a new self entering the heart and mind.

Jonah, after being returned to life inside the belly of the whale, can be likened to the new self or new nature or new creature born of spirit dwelling in a tent of flesh. The new creature is not male or female, Jew or Greek (Gal 3:28), and is, therefore, not the person's fleshly body which after baptism remains male or female. Thus, the whale's body is to Jonah as the fleshly body of the person is to the new creature that is a son of God, and the whale spewing Jonah forth is analogous to glorification.

The Church is, now, like a Smyrna fig tree in that it is the assembly of new selves or new creatures that have been born of spirit as sons of God (i.e., pollinated by the Holy Spirit), with Christ Jesus as the First of these firstborn sons of God—

Or the Church is like a common fig tree in that it is an assembly of unisex unpollinated cyconia that looks like fruit but has within each piece of “fruit” hollow seeds that have no life, with the breba crop of common figs often killed by winter frosts so that when Jesus went to the tree there were not even the “green figs” (cyconia) that should have been there.

How is the person who doesn’t know the difference between a Smyrna fig and a common fig to determine whether a “fig” has been pollinated and has seeds with life within them or has hollow seeds within the “fruit” (syconia)? How is a person who has never put a sickle to barley to know the difference between barley and tares (false grain)? Can a person tell one from the other by just “looking” from a distance?

Jesus can.

And He tells his harvesters to let the tares grow with the grain until it is time to harvest both. Then the tares will be cut first, bound, and cast into the fire (Matt 13:36–43).

Let the common people eat common figs; let them attend Catholic and Protestant churches where they are told lies about the Father and the Son. Jesus will look for fruit and not find it before He comes as the all powerful Messiah—and when He finds no fruit in these churches, He will curse them, and they will wither and die before the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man.

Is “lies” too strong a word, a word that accuses Christendom of deliberated falseness?

Does anyone sincerely believe that the pastors and teachers of 8th-day Christendom have not read Jesus’ words about not abolishing the Law or the Prophets? Or have not read the stated conditions of the New Covenant that will have the Torah put within everyone who is of Israel (Jer 31:33)? Of course they have read Jesus’ words; they have read His words in Greek. But they do not believe Jesus meant what He said, and usually they don’t believe Jesus was more than a good man, a Hebrew of questionable lineage who told stories in Greek.

The human tree that began with Adam, who chose to cover his nakedness with fig leaves, produces common fruit that can be likened to the syconia of the common fig tree. It is this human tree that will wither and perish when the fruit of the spirit is not found on it after having been pollinated by the Holy Spirit. And just by looking, a person will not know whether pollination has occurred until fruit is borne. It is then when those disciples who are of Smyrna (and of the other six Churches of God) will separate themselves from common figs.

In the sign of Jonah, the new life within the flesh is analogous to the resurrected Jonah in the whale, with Jonah being a recognized spokesman for God by the Gentiles of Nineveh. In the case of the fig tree, the new life within the flesh is analogous to the pollinated seeds of Smyrna figs. And in both cases, the fleshly body of a human being is merely a container in which the new life is born of spirit through the person receiving a second breath of life, a breath that is not of this world giving to the person life that is not of this world or from this world.

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