

Commentary — From the Margins

Fiat Enslavement

Part Five

The Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land that I give you, the land shall keep a Sabbath to the Lord. For six years you shall sow your field, and for six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its fruits, but in the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a Sabbath to the Lord. You shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. You shall not reap what grows of itself in your harvest, or gather the grapes of your undressed vine. It shall be a year of solemn rest for the land. The Sabbath of the land shall provide food for you, for yourself and for your male and female slaves and for your hired servant and the sojourner who lives with you, and for your cattle and for the wild animals that are in your land: all its yield shall be for food. / You shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the time of the seven weeks of years shall give you forty-nine years. Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land. And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan. *That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you; in it you shall neither sow nor reap what grows of itself nor gather the grapes from the undressed vines. For it is a jubilee. It shall be holy to you. You may eat the produce of the field.* / In this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his property. And if you make a sale to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor, you shall not wrong one another. You shall pay your neighbor according to the number of

years after the jubilee, and he shall sell to you according to the number of years for crops. If the years are many, you shall increase the price, and if the years are few, you shall reduce the price, for *it is the number of the crops that he is selling to you*. You shall not wrong one another, but you shall fear your God, for I am the Lord your God. / Therefore you shall do my statutes and keep my rules and perform them, and then you will dwell in the land securely. The land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and dwell in it securely. And if you say, ‘What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather in our crop?’ I will command my blessing on you in the sixth year, so that it will produce a crop sufficient for three years. *When you sow in the eighth year, you will be eating some of the old crop; you shall eat the old until the ninth year, when its crop arrives.* / The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine. For you are strangers and sojourners with me. And in all the country you possess, you shall allow a redemption of the land.” (Lev 25:1–24 emphasis added)

Even if more of this Commentary remains to be written at the end of this part, this section will conclude the commentary.

13.

To claim that Barrack Hussein Obama *deliberately* seeks the destruction of the American dream is a horrible indictment of an elected president of the United States, but there is no other rational explanation for the fiscal irresponsibility of the present Administration. In a period of diminished economic activity, spending massive amounts of borrowed money makes no sense if the presumption that money represents wealth is believed. Only if Democratic strategists understand that those individuals and nations holding U.S. dollar *certificates of debt* hold nothing of real worth, that through hyperinflation America can clear its debt, especially if this hyperinflation is mixed with the collapse of constitutional governance due to irresolvable differences between fiscally conservative Republicans and tax-n-spend Democrats—only if the President and his administration sincerely believe economic theories that have credit equating to wealth can President Obama justify the power grab he is attempting.

Those politicians who are fiscally conservative apparently want to continue the deception that U.S. dollars represent *real wealth* instead of *real debt*; whereas Democratic theorists seem only to want *democracy* to represent equal worth between producers and non-producers, a utopia in which no one’s poverty

or prosperity is greater than anyone else's, a regime of shared wealth and sacrifice.

Using debt as wealth only works when that debt is not held *in situ*, but is circulated in a schema like I employed when I began a business with no money and no assets on the Kenai Peninsula: merchandise was ordered on credit and sold for whatever profit could be made before the billing statement was received. The small amount of profit made was then plowed back into the business to stock outboard and chainsaw parts that didn't turn over quickly, but that had higher profit margins. Hence, I was always *running* to stay even, sending a reasonable number of chainsaws and outboards out the front door, knowing that at some point in the future I would sell parts or saw chain to everyone who purchased a saw or a kicker at bargain basement prices. The object wasn't to sell a saw or a kicker now and then, but to sell every one I could, which took potential sales away from my competitors, all with higher operating costs than I had. For I neither paid myself a salary, nor paid rentals for the shop ... I built my shop, a 26x36 foot building, the lumber for which I obtained via trades. Same for the dirt work. My total out-of-pocket outlay was about \$3,000, seven chainsaws and an outboard. The property was purchased as an undeveloped one-acre lot on Poppy Lane between the college and K-Beach Road: the purchase was for \$4,500., with the terms being a \$200./downpayment and \$45./month payments. I had to wait for telephone service for two years.

At one time, most every American had opportunities like I had on the Kenai, then at Dutch Harbor. By fiscally running fast and playing loose with *sound business practices*, something could be created from nothing: a business could be started where none had previously been. A job could be created, an income earned, taxes paid ... my business income was then, and still is, my taxable income. I still don't pay myself a wage. All moneys received go first to continue the work being done. I had then on the Kenai as I have now the option of deferring taxes by continually growing the business: the greatest limiting factor I had on the Kenai was an inability to hire qualified help. I certainly couldn't afford to pay an employee a yearround *living wage* when I wasn't paying myself a wage. What I could afford was for me to work an additional six or eight or ten hours a day during the summer season and catch up on sleep during the winter months.

Philosophically, I wasn't opposed to hiring someone capable of doing the work I did during those late night hours, but such a person wanted fulltime employment—so I worked nearly day and night until I burned out. Commercial fishing gave me the chance to get away from customers who needed the engine fixed as soon as possible (if the person would have wanted the outboard fixed tomorrow, the person would have brought it in tomorrow—after all, the boat only swamped a few minutes ago, and there was a real need to get the engine apart and dried out immediately).

Is that the American dream, working without drawing wages, working for the sake of working, the ultimate goal of Marxism, working for the satisfaction that work brings? Or is the American dream one of bettering the person and his or her family, changing forever the course of the family's history, working long hours to

build a life and a retirement that will never come except through selling the business and greatly enriching the federal government? For the small business owners I know and knew, their payday came when they sold the business. Until then, it was a struggle to keep the doors open.

Did not Bill Gates change the course of his family's history? And are not these changed family histories made more difficult daily by government regulations and bebies of attorneys producing no useful work of their own?

I worked for several years as a shift shop steward for AWPPW Local 13, at Toledo, Oregon. In working for Georgia-Pacific in the pulp mill, I saw the need for collective representation; I was merely a timecard number, #5331, replaceable by another number. I also saw abuses of collective representation and bargaining, enough abuses that I would never have hired a unionized employee ... an employee has no greater worth than his or her employer: if the employer doesn't pay him or herself a wage but rather occasionally draws against the business profits, taking nothing from the business when there are no profits, making do without an income for extended periods yet working every day—this really is the story of small business ownership in America, a story that is finally being told on television through the various docudrama reality shows such as *Swamp Loggers* or *American Loggers* or *Ax Men* or *Deadliest Catch*—then the concept of employees receiving a guaranteed *living wage* will drive the last nail into the American coffin. If the employer works for a percentage of the profits or works for shares as on a commercial fishing vessel, then the employee also needs to work for a share of the profits, not for wages. If there is no shared risk, there is no shared claim to the success of the venture. Only when both employee and employer share the risk of loss and the reward of success will the employee work as hard as the employer works; so when risk is shared, rewards are also shared. And it is this principle that underlies what Jesus said:

Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. *The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward.* And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward. (Matt 10:40–42 emphasis added)

The person who receives a prophet, who supports a prophet because he is a prophet, shares in the risks of the prophet and thereby rightfully deserves to receive the reward of the prophet—and there are risks involved in receiving a prophet as there are rewards. What if the prophet is wrong? The whole world will hate the two witnesses (Rev 11:7–10) ... will the whole world also hate those who receive/support the two witnesses? Yes, the world will. And even today, before the two witnesses are known but after I was called to reread prophecy, greater Christendom isn't patting me on the back for denouncing its sinfulness. Presently, greater Christendom ignores what I write, but after the Second Passover occurs that ignoring will become loathing for numerous reasons, the

foremost being that the Second Passover will be evidence that Christian leaders, theologians, pastors have never been of God but have been for all of their ministry of the Adversary.

American Conservatives will not applaud me for stating in declarative sentences that the United States of America's Constitution was not inspired by God, but by the Adversary.

To receive me, to extend support as some few do presents a risk for which equal rewards will be received, as if appropriate. My reward came with the calling and has nothing to do with whether anyone believes my words but has everything to do with whether I faithfully execute that calling to reread prophecy. However, my faithfulness in doing the work of rereading prophecy extends as a covering over everyone who receives me through my words; so today, when word that a Second Passover liberation of Israel has been proclaimed, I continue to work so that others can share even greater rewards in heaven and here on earth, with the rewards here on earth not coming through additional physical things but through a sufficiency in knowledge and understanding that will function as a protective umbrella when the world collapses around them. Simply knowing what will happen and has happened when the Second Passover occurs will be a comfort that few have the morning after.

Progressives and Conservatives can argue otherwise, but representational democracy as practiced in the United States of America is what Israel in the wilderness would have had if Korah and friends had prevailed against Moses and Aaron: representational democracy, like pure democracy, will never work for man cannot rule himself, especially when all of humankind has been consigned to disobedience [the ways of the Adversary] so that God can have mercy on all (Rom 11:32) — and God ending democracy and all forms of democratic rule will be a physical manifestation of mercy. God ending humankind's subjection to death will be the heavenly or spiritual manifestation of mercy.

Democracy is a curse not seen as a curse until it produces its fruit, governmental gridlock that paralyzes a nation or a people, with the poor voting themselves a share of the wealth of the rich thereby punishing achievers and rewarding non-achievers; hence, democracy and representational democracy demonstrates—and forms the proof text—that man cannot long rule himself. And therein lies democracy's connection to sin, which like democracy has a *work* to do, a negative *work*, not the sort of necessary *work* a person would expect an ideology to do.

Why can't men rule themselves? Why can't a business be run by a committee? Why can't a war be waged without general officers?

The questions democracy introduces are endless: Why shouldn't women have equal standing in marriage with their husbands? Why shouldn't men be permitted to marry men and women permitted to marry women and adults permitted to marry children? Why shouldn't animals have equal rights with people? Why shouldn't human rights be extended to the earth? And to each of these questions, democracy answers, yes, women should have equal standing; marriage should include all peoples; animals should have rights; and the earth

should have rights. And wars should be fought without general officers: arm the rabble and send forth the lynch mobs. At a time when Americans voted themselves a teleprompter for president, Americans are eating the fruits of democracy, fruits consumed before being purchased, the price of the purchase billed to stillborn children.

Again, the leading proponent of democracy and of democratic equality among humankind is the Adversary; again, so there is no doubt, the work of democracy is to demonstrate that humankind cannot rule itself. Democracy in all of its forms is of the Adversary, who sought equality with the Most High. But tell me, before whom shall the Most High stand for examination? Who is like the Most High? Of all Israel, who was like Moses, who was to be God to Aaron (Ex 4:16)? Certainly not Korah and his friends.

Even if the Adversary is not directly involved in a democratic movement as was the case in Korah and friends' rebellion against Moses and Aaron (Num chap 16), the concept of equality is problematic. For Jesus would have the person who is greatest serving the one who is least: the person who is greatest serves the most. Greatness doesn't come via election or by vacationing every other week, playing repeated rounds of golf. Greatness doesn't come through a teleprompter. Greatness comes only through serving, not being served. And political leaders in this world are the basest of men and women (Dan 4:17) ... honor is to be given to whom honor is owed (Rom 13:7), and no honor is owed to the basest/lowliest of men. Rather, honor is to be given to Christ Jesus and the Most High God, with this honor coming through believing God and striving to keep His commandments.

Moses did not return from atop Mt. Sinai with a teleprompter, but with two tablets of stone upon which were written ten living words. To break these words were to break the tablets, and the person who broke these words was to be stoned, for the broken commandment kills—and this includes the Sabbath commandment. Following the Second Passover liberation of Israel when sins will no longer be remembers, simple unbelief will condemn the Christian to the lake of fire. About this, Paul wrote,

The coming of the lawless one [the man of perdition] is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore *God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* (2 Thess 2:9–12)

The Christian over whom God sends a strong delusion because the Christian refuses to love the truth [to love what is not concealed] will go to the lake of fire insisting that what he or she believes is correct. No one will be able to convince this person that what he or she believes is false. And the shadow and type of a Christian in the Affliction coming under a strong delusion is today seen in the Sacred Names Heresy, where Sabbatarian Christians insist that salvation comes through uttering Jesus' name in bastardized Hebrew. No Sabbatarian who

swallows this heresy can be recovered: the Sabbatarian by his or her denial of Christ Jesus has been cut off from Christ and condemned to the lake of fire. For the Sabbatarian who has swallowed this poison pill will never repent, but will continue to believe that Jesus' name must be uttered with a certain sound made in this world by the movement of air, that salvation resides in making this sound—and this is out-n-out witchcraft.

Jeremiah was told not to pray for the people of Israel (Jer 7:16). Ezekiel was told that the Lord would not entertain inquiry by the men of Israel (Ezek 20:3). And the same holds true for the present democratically elected leaders of the United States of America: they are the leaders America has chosen for itself, and they truly do not represent the best America has to offer; rather, with a very few exceptions, they represent the worst.

American politicians can be likened to Korah and his friends, and as the earth swallowed Korah thereby forming the shadow and type of the Abyss swallowing the Adversary and his angels, the Second Passover liberation of Israel will swallow President and Vice-President, leaving a shattered Administration and power held by the Speaker of the House. And there is nothing the Secret Service or anyone other than President Obama can do to save himself: if the President truly desires to live physically beyond the Second Passover liberation of Israel, he must repent, turn to God, humble himself and take the Passover sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed. He won't, though. He won't humble himself. His arrogance won't permit himself to humble himself before God; therefore, his demise is certain—

For a Christian who has no stake in the Body Politick of America or of this world, the higher authority (from Rom 13:1) to whom he or she is to be in subjection is the Father and the Son. Because the genuine Christian has no stake in the Body Politick, the Christian neither protests against what the Body Politick determines is lawful, nor votes for or against politicians, but obeys God, with that obedience trumping whatever the Body Politick determines is right and good. This means that on occasion, the Body Politick will slay genuine Christians as occurred in Europe when both Roman Christians and Reform Christians slew many Anabaptists in the 16th and 17th Centuries. But at the end of the age, the tables will be turned and the temple again cleansed.

If the Second Passover occurs this year on the second Passover, May 19th, President Obama will be merely one of some two billion uncovered firstborns that perish in a day ... when the Second Passover occurs, there will be a political power vacuum created, with many men striving to seize power, not the least of whom will be Christian pastors who will be as ten of the spies Moses sent into the Promised Land were. These ten Christian traitors will be in place before the man of perdition appears on day 220 of the Affliction.

The equality with Moses and Aaron that Korah and friends sought represents the equality that Lucifer sought when he said in his heart, "I will make myself like the Most High" (Isa 14:14) ... democracy would have angelic sons of God claiming equality with God their Creator while they remain servants; democracy

would have human sons of God claiming equality with Christ Jesus while being sons-too-young-to-yet-inherit the things of God.

There was no equality between Moses and Korah. Yes, both were men, descendants of Levi, but Korah had been reared as a slave; Moses had not been reared as a slave. Korah grew to maturity as a slave in the geographical land representing sin. Moses grew to maturity in the same land, but as Pharaoh's daughter's son; i.e., as part of the ruling hierarchy. Korah never had a choice about whether he would identify himself with Israel: his circumcision on the eighth day removed that choice. But Moses, although circumcised, had a choice about whether he would identify himself with Israel, or whether he would continue as one of the ruling elite.

A Christian has the same choice that Moses had: the Christian can continue in this world as one of the ruling elite, ruling with the Adversary—this is the choice made by Gov. Mike Huckabee, a Baptist minister, and by political pundits such as Glenn Beck—or the Christian can identify him or herself with Israel and with Christ Jesus, who lived as an observant Jew. The Christian who walks as Jesus walked will keep the commandments of God, especially the Sabbaths of God; will spurn unclean meats and will seek purity even though the Christian will come up short of his or her goal of perfection. Grace covers this shortfall.

Neither a Muslim nor a Buddhist has a choice about whether he or she will continue in this world as one of the ruling elite: both are like Egyptians were when Pharaoh, by stealth, enslaved the Hebrews. But Christians reared in the household of the Adversary—reared in rebellion to God; reared not to keep the commandments of God or to believe the words of the Lord—have the option of leaving the ruling elite, separating themselves from the politics of this world and all that politics and the Body Politick represent, and truly believe God, keeping the commandments, especially the Sabbath commandment which causes a person to live out-of-sync with his or her neighbors and the world surrounding the person. The Christian who will not leave the ruling elite, who will not quit participation in the Body Politick doesn't leave because the Christian is not yet a firstborn son of God even though the Christian has been sanctified by Christ Jesus whom the Christian doesn't know.

Keeping the Sabbaths of God was, for Israel, a sign between the Lord and the nation that the nation knows the Lord sanctifies the nation; for the Sabbath is a sign between the people of Israel and the Lord “that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed” (Ex 31:17) ... Israel is now the nation circumcised of heart (Rom 2:28–29), not the nation circumcised in the flesh, not the nation that clings to the identifying noun, *Israel*, without clinging to God. Israel is not the nation that is remembered for its ancestors, not for its righteousness.

Although the outwardly circumcised nation of Israel had a law—was given a covenant—that would lead to righteousness (Rom 9:31) if this Israel had pursued the covenant by faith [that law being the Moab covenant — Deut chaps 29–32]] rather than through the works of its hands, the outwardly circumcised nation of Israel was prevented from having indwelling eternal life because of its fathers'

rebellion at Mt. Sinai. On the day following that rebellion, the Lord told Moses, “*Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book.* But now go, lead the people to the place about which I have spoken to you; behold, my angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, *in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them*” (Ex 32:33–34 emphasis added) ... where in Scripture does the Lord forgive the nation of Israel for this rebellion? The Lord defers to Moses and doesn’t immediately slay Israel. Instead, He gave to Israel a command by which outwardly circumcised Israel to this day has been prevented from having eternal life: “You shall kindle no fire in all your dwelling places on the Sabbath day” (Ex 35:3).

When greater Christendom rebels against God following the Second Passover, this circumcised-of-heart nation of Israel will never enter into God’s rest, heaven, because it, too, will believe the words of the Lord that prevent the nation from having eternal life. The M.O. of the Lord is unchanging: *if you rebel against Him, He will send you statutes that are not good and rules by which you cannot have life so that He might devastate you* (Ezek 20:25–26). *He will send a strong delusion over you so that you will believe what is false; He will do this, for He is not in the business of creating additional adversaries, Christians who support democracy and display tolerance of the intolerable. All tolerance of unbelief ends with the Second Passover.*

If a person has ever dealt with a *know-it-all*, a person who knows nothing but claims to know everything, having done *this* for five years and having done *that* for five years and having done *this other thing* for five years when the person isn’t old enough to have done much of anything, then the person can begin to appreciate how difficult it is and how difficult it will be to teach Christians the fundamentals of God now and later, after the Second Passover liberation of Israel. They will think that they know everything. They already think they know everything, that they are teachers when they are, at best, spiritual infants with soiled diapers. Thus, God, understanding the problem, will use sin to produce its *work* of making Christians teachable or of simply getting rid of them so that they cease to be clutter in the house of God. As Jesus thrice cleansed the temple during His earthly ministry, the Lord will cleanse the heavenly temple, using sin as His whip of cords to drive from His house those Christians who refuse to hear His words and believe the One who sent Him to this earth.

Prior to the Second Passover, the Christian who identifies him or herself with Israel as Moses did when he slew the Egyptian (Ex 2:11–12) will by faith begin to keep the commandments, especially the Sabbath commandment. The Christian who continues to live as an Egyptian—who continues to participate in the Body Politick—will continue to live as a son of disobedience, willfully transgressing one or more of the commandments, with the commandment most likely transgressed being the Sabbath commandment. That Christian will be as Moses *would have been* if Moses had turned his back to the Hebrew being beaten, but that wasn’t what Moses did. Hence, Moses was to be—forty years later—as God to Aaron (Ex 4:16) and to the Israelites, the Lord’s firstborn son (*v.* 22).

Understand, Moses had reached a point where he had to intervene physically to defend his brethren; he could no longer tolerate the abuse Egyptians were administering to his brothers ... Moses wasn't abused. Technically, Moses could have been as Sabbatarian Christians are who receive/support a swindler such as Norman Scott Edwards, who took advantage of three Sabbatarians whom he identified as his brothers, one of whom was an elderly, disabled person of color who had invested more than a \$100,000.00 in real property, for which he was one of four trustees, the Purchase Agreement recorded with Huron County's Register of Deeds. Edwards filed an additional Purchase Agreement over the top of an already valid agreement, with only himself as trustee, thereby with a few strokes of a pen in his shaky hand writing out—blotting out—the ownership position of the other three Sabbatarian Christians who were and remain reluctant to take a *brother* to court. But a brother doesn't do what Edwards did. A brother does what Moses did. And though it took forty years, Moses led Israel, his brethren, out from slavery, out from Egypt, not by the strength of his arm or by the edge of his sword, but with a staff and the support of the Lord.

Moses as a character coupled to his interaction with Pharaoh and with Israel forms a *drama* (a dramatic play) like that of the *Mousetrap* in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* ... *the Mousetrap is the thing to trap the king*—and Moses and the Exodus is the thing to trap the Adversary, who functions in this world as Hamlet's uncle Claudius functioned in Shakespeare's play. But if a Christian doesn't realize that he or she is a character in a play, in a simulation, then the Christian is as Gertrude (Hamlet's mother) was, the naïve widow who has married her husband's murderer. Only when the Christian gets off the stage, takes a set back, and takes a seat in the audience will the Christian begin to realize that there is no more difference between President Obama and Gov Huckabee, or between George Soros and Glenn Beck than there is between black and white pawns in a chess game.

All of the world is a stage, according to Shakespeare, who understood what neither the Puritans of his day nor Sabbatarian Christians of this present age have been able to understand. ... Humanity forms many traveling *acting companies* that “perform” on the stage that is this world, but within these many *acting companies* is one special traveling company that performs dramas commanded by the king, dramas that are relayed to this company through a play within a play, a favorite literary device of Shakespeare and his visible manifestation of double-voiced discourse. Claudius' reaction to *The Mousetrap* revealed to the younger Hamlet the guilt of his uncle; for Hamlet didn't fully trust the ghost of his father, old Hamlet. The Son had doubts about the truthfulness what had been relayed to him by his father's ghost, which is what makes Shakespeare's mention of Wittenberg—where Hamlet, Horatio, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern attended the university, and where Martin Luther proposed his 95 theses in 1517—most interesting; for again, the *Mousetrap* can be likened to our *drama within the drama*, with our drama being titled, *The Pursuit of Righteousness*.

The Pursuit of Righteousness is the play within the play that has as our on-stage audience the angelic kingdom, created sons of God in which there is a Claudius, a Hamlet, a Gertrude, a Polonius, an Ophelia, a Horatio, a Laertes, and on through the characters Shakespeare created (or borrowed). The story of Israel isn't the central drama of our time, and Israel, either outwardly circumcised or circumcised of heart, is merely an actor within a larger or greater drama that saw an anointed cherub lead a rebellion against his Creator. Humankind is both of much less worth than it imagines itself, and of much greater worth than imaginable.

Moses and the Exodus is for Christendom what *The Mousetrap* was for young Hamlet. Likewise, the story of Christendom is for angelic sons of God what *The Mousetrap* was for young Hamlet, Claudius, Gertrude and the rest of the characters Shakespeare created. The Abyss functions as the stage, with the earth being the court where *The Mousetrap* was performed. And God—Father and Son—is outside of the Abyss as Shakespeare's audience, notably the Queen, was not on-stage when *Hamlet* was performed.

The work of the *Mousetrap* was to reveal a murderer and confirm that a murder had indeed occurred. To that end, the play was successful although much remained to be accomplished before the drama would end with only Horatio left to tell the story when the invaders come to claim the throne —

Sin has a work to do like that of the *Mousetrap*, for leavening can be likened to sin: the work of leavening/yeast is to cause a *rising*, which when in a confined space produces pressure and when in open space produces an expansion of volume without an increase in mass. The two most familiar uses of yeast is (1) to cause bread to raise, transforming hard, flat unleavened bread into soft, puffy, raised bread, and (2) to cause fruit juices, notably grape juice, to ferment, thereby transforming juice into wine [or cider or perry].

The Passover sacraments of unleavened bread and wine represent the before and after state of sin having done its work: unleavened bread is flour and water mixed together and baked before wild yeast spores locate the dough and begin to cause the dough to rise; hence, unleavened bread representing the *before state* of sin doing its work in the drama titled, *The Pursuit of Righteousness*. Unleavened bread represents Christ's body, but doesn't represent Christians who are, when glorified, represented by the two loaves of leavened bread waved before the Lord on the Feast of Weeks (Lev 23:17) ... the baking process kills the yeast. The glorification of saints will *kill* any sin lingering within the firstfruits.

Once again, when Moses slew the Egyptian that was beating the Hebrew, *sin* had completed its work in Moses, who was now a murderer and who would soon become a fugitive, escaped from Egypt/*sin* and separated from his people ... the work of sin in *The Pursuit of Righteousness* isn't to cause the Israelite to continue in sin, but to cause the Israelite to flee sin. If the Christian, a circumcised-of-heart Israelite, continues in sin, the Israelite will complain a lot, but will become comfortable as Sin's bondservant, taking from this world whatever small comforts that the Christian can sneak away from the Adversary.

For a while in the early 1980s, I repaired chainsaws for Sutliff's True Value Hardware, Kodiak, Alaska—and Sutliff's had a wall of bins filled with bolts and nuts to which customers, mostly fishermen, could help themselves. And that is what many of the customers did: they helped themselves, with thousands of dollars worth of bolts and nuts walking out of the store without being paid-for. I asked Norm Sutliff, the store's founder, why he allowed the shoplifting to continue. His response surprised me, for he said that the hardware was cheap advertising. He said that if a fishermen spending tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars in the store walked off with ten dollars worth of nuts and bolts, he, Norm, would make up more than the amount stolen on the fisherman's next major purchase, that he sort of kept track of who took what.

Israel in Egypt—slaves of the Pharaoh—enjoyed their small pleasures, which came at the price of a lifetime of slavery, with their small pleasures being likened to the nuts and bolts that walked out of Sutliff's in the pockets of fishermen who would return to purchase raingear and cordage, paint and most everything else their boats needed to fish for the season.

The work of sin is to cause the Christian to recognize him or herself as a sinner and then flee sin as Moses, then a murderer, fled Egypt. No person can live as a Christian and long walk as a sinner, the point John makes,

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:4–10)

It took Sin a while for this spiritual king of the South to do his work in me, but that work was accomplished. One more essay from two decades ago, then I'm done

SMITH, LOGGER, FISHERMAN, WRITER

Since the narratives of Homer, life in Western literature has been portrayed as a journey, the metaphor being that the passage of life equals distance traveled. Often the journey is a voyage, a motif present even in a story like *Moby-Dick*; Thoreau quietly floated the Merrimack. The downstream river trip can signify that a person can't go back in time, that an adult can't recapture his or her youth, that no fountain-of-youth exists. But Homer's *Odyssey* tells of a figurative upstream journey like a salmon's

migration to its spawning gravel, the gravel of its birth, where it will breed and die.

A voyage into the unknown is living life itself, the unknown representing tomorrow, holding, perhaps, danger and excitement but most often the mundane. Literary heroes dared sail 20,000 leagues under the sea, or to the center of the earth, or more realistically, to trek over the Great Silk Road or mush dogs to the South Pole. A few of us humans have even walked on the moon. For more of us, though, a drift or fishing trip down Alaska's Kenai River is enough venturing into the unknown. We want to know most of what tomorrow will bring. We are not really looking for excitement, only for interesting things, those things that John Haines concedes to travel writers. The thrill-seeker is considered abnormal. We would like to have control of our lives. In literary shorthand, we want heaven when we die; we want to believe an idealized destination awaits us at the end of this voyage called life. Then the obstacles we encounter won't matter. The distance of our voyage doesn't matter. Only arriving matters. We can leave all of our problems in that metaphorical river we travel as if those problems were old tires or tin cans, oil slicks or biotoxins.

But it takes no courage to continue living shackled to the trash that the heavenbound person will leave behind at death (although nearly every religion believes humanity's ultimate destination is heaven, the focus of ancient Hebrew prophets was making the deserts here on earth bloom). It takes courage to clean up that left-behind trash, to pick up those pieces of our character that hang like plastic grocery bags on submerged tree branches ... I once sailed out of Kodiak, heading for Whale Pass and Raspberry Strait. We were outbound for a week of longlining halibut. My wife was putting away boat groceries, and after rounding Buoy Four, I looked behind us to see if a following vessel had made the turn or whether its skipper was heading directly across Marmot Bay. And there behind us, one every one hundred yards or so, were floating the cardboard boxes in which we had packed our groceries aboard, each bobbing like a buoy. They were like the crumbs of Hansel & Gretel.

All of us leave a trail, but not all of us leave distinguishable footprints.

Courage is required to take that first step into an uncharted tomorrow, one in which our character is our only marker. It is there, at that first step, where most journeys end, or rather, fail to begin. Once a person is well on his or her way into the unknown, coping, adapting, learning, stretching oneself to do what wasn't before possible takes over. The momentum of the journey doesn't let a person think about not continuing. Explorer, pioneer, pilgrim—few have seen themselves as courageous. Survival is what the journey is about until the unknown becomes the familiar. Courage is about getting started.

I am familiar with the reluctance to begin a voyage. I have felt that reluctance, have felt hesitation, even fear. When I first went to sea, I knew very little; plus, I experience rather severe motion sickness. All the while I lived along the Oregon Coast, I fished freshwater. I didn't go to sea (I don't even like sitting in a passenger car; subtle movements make me vomit). I probably hadn't been across the bar at Newport, Oregon, ten hours total before I, after selling my Kenai chainsaw/outboard dealership,

bought a 29-foot Bartender sitting on barrels in Homer, Alaska. I hadn't been to sea in Cook Inlet, let alone out of the Inlet. Acquaintances thought I was crazy, but I knew I wasn't. I was merely pushing hard against foolishness. But I was also facing some tough decisions: I had begun to dislike myself. Having a sales/service dealership had magnified character defects that I thought I had cleaned up. I needed to get away, at least for a while, from the temptation to tell customers that a piston or a CD module or whatever had been ordered when I had forgotten to order it. The telling of the little lie had become too easy, and it isn't the big hunks of trash like old car bodies that kills a river. It's the little things like oil droplets that smother life. One droplet here and there doesn't kill, but one droplet becomes another and another until there's an oil sheen, then a slick, and finally the river catches fire, a definition of life in hell or in Gary, Indiana.

What I didn't know about the sea was so great that I believed I could sail to Kodiak, and possibly into the Aleutians. But I did know enough to be scared: in a very real sense, I was afraid of the unknown. I had heard stories of how rough the weather was in the Barren Islands, on Shelikof Strait, at Sand Point, King Cove, Dutch Harbor. I knew mileage-wise how far away Kodiak was. I bought charts of the archipelago. But for the three years I had been selling outboards to Cook Inlet fisherman, admittedly, to mostly setnetters, I was told many, many horror stories about Shelikof Strait. So when these Inlet fishermen learned that I had bought a boat their advice was that I should stay in Cook Inlet, and fish out of Homer or Seldovia, perhaps Kenai or Kasilof. But at Kodiak, I was told by an equal number of fishermen about how terrible the weather was and the tides were in Cook Inlet. As far as Kodiak fishermen were concerned the only place that began to compare in roughness with Cook Inlet was fishing at False Pass. But when I sailed south to King Cove, I spent a Sabbath afternoon with a fisherman who regularly fished False Pass, and he told me the worse seas he had ever seen were on Shelikof Strait, that no place was as bad as there.

Every fisherman I spoke to in 1979 said somewhere else was worse than where he fished.

Before I sold my shop at Kenai, I read journals of the Russian-American Company. While I was told by experienced fishermen that a forty foot boat was needed for fishing out of Kodiak or Chignik and a ninety footer was necessary for the Bering Sea, I knew that Baranof had traveled by *bidar* (a large *bidarka* or kayak) along both sides of the Alaska Peninsula. I knew how poorly constructed were the vessels in which Russian-American Company officials sailed from Ohotsk to Kodiak. Their vessels were of a riverboat design and were lashed together.

When I was in high school, George Calkins, designer of Bartenders, had his shop on D-River—I passed his shop twice every school day. I knew what local fishermen said about how exceptionally seaworthy were all of Calkins' designs. The father of a classmate, Keith Miles, built trailers for Bartenders (Bartenders were featured on Oregon fishing shows). I grew up wanting a Bartender; I lusted for one every day I was in high school and for some years afterwards. And the vessel I purchased was a 29-foot Bartender so, perhaps, I was less concerned about the vessel's length than

were the fishermen telling me to stay in Cook Inlet ... after I acquired the Bartender, I called George Calkins and talked to him; I called partially to reassure myself and partially to know what to expect from the underpowered hull (the design called for twice as much horsepower as I could possibly produce from the 3-51 Jimmie that was in the boat when I bought it). I should also add that George Calkins was most gracious when I called and even sent gratis a copy of plans for the 29-footer so I could return it to design specifications.

I had a vessel of good design, an engine with a reputation for durability. I was the weak link, but I knew that as I sailed out of Homer's small boat harbor for the first time. I might have stayed in Kachemak Bay, but I needed to get away from familiar faces, familiar circumstances, and old habits. Years later, I became acquainted with a museum curator who was an alcoholic. She wanted to quit drinking, truly. But she didn't want to leave friends, who, whenever they saw her, stuck a beer in her hand. I have heard it said that it takes more courage to stay and face a problem than to run. I'm sure it does. But I can't think of a better way of letting a problem kill you, either.

When I sailed from Homer, I had been in business for myself for twelve years. I had a fair idea of what it took to make a business successful. So as I sailed for Kodiak, I knew I had entered the "fishing" business. My product would be dressed fish, and my goal was to deliver as much product as possible with the resources I had available. That meant I had to go to where the fish were, not that there weren't halibut in Cook Inlet. But I had to go to where I could catch fish, while knowing that I needed a certain degree of seclusion to practice a new craft. Even by 1979, Lower Cook Inlet was heavily fished. Gear was laid atop gear. It was a big mess out there and one with which I would have to deal while seasick. Around the Kodiak archipelago were many secluded bays not heavily fished and with relatively calm water (actually fishing most of the bays of Afognak Island was like fishing in lakes). Plus, I believed the fishing would be better around Kodiak.

When I sailed out of Homer's small boat harbor for the first time, my intention was to make a shake-down cruise to see if everything worked the way it was supposed to. I planned to sail as far as Seldovia, then loop back to Homer. But halibut season was open, had been open for a week. We had just experienced a week of calm weather, a week with seas under three-feet, not that common on the North Pacific. I had no real reason to return to Homer. I had fuel and groceries on board. I knew the weather wouldn't hold many more days, and I knew it would be harder to sail away from Homer a second time. I knew from the hesitancy I felt about the double unknown of sailing to Kodiak and laying longline gear that I could be convinced to fish Lower Cook Inlet. I could be talked out of doing what I thought was best.

The metaphor of life as a journey works because the easiest choice is to not make a choice, to not take a first step into the unknown, to play it safe by staying in the familiar situation, to hunker down and drift, letting time take you where it will. It takes courage to start; it takes common sense to actually travel that unknown course, for life is no planned tourist

trip to 5-Star hotels, Medieval castles and cathedrals, with tour guides and rigid schedules. Rather, life is more like sailing an everchanging sea to where others have gone before, but where every voyage is different. It is like my sailing to Kodiak. I knew where I was going. I even knew how to get there. I just didn't know what the weather would be; I didn't know whether I would have engine problems; I didn't know if I would have enough money. I only knew that there would be problems I would have to solve, and that I would see spectacular scenery while catching fish. I never entertained the idea that I would regret setting out for Kodiak, then later the Aleutians. Perhaps I wasn't that insightful. Or perhaps the same spirit is in me as was in my forefathers who sailed into the unknown on the *Mayflower*, or left Amsterdam for what would be New Amsterdam sixty years later. Or perhaps I was merely following in the footsteps of my forefathers who poached whales in Alaskan waters from under the guns of the Tzarist navy.

I didn't turn around and go back to Homer. Rather, I plotted a course for the west side of Kodiak—I wanted room for navigational error. If I missed the archipelago on the east side, the next landfall would be Hawaii. I was less afraid of Shelikof Strait than I was of me miscalculating the course.

The weather changed by the time I reached the Barrens as I suspected it might. But I was far enough south that I missed most of the roughness where seas pile up entering Cook Inlet. My biggest problem was I lost visual landmarks. I was being pulled south by a falling tide in Shelikof Strait, but I had less than fifty feet of visibility above me and about two hundred yards horizontally. I didn't know where I was. I didn't know how fast I was traveling. I had no radar. I had nothing to gauge where I was other than that the current felt like I was in a river.

I left Homer a few hours before dark. Daybreak found me south of the Barrens—I assume those islands were the Barrens and not the Chugachs. Regardless, by midafternoon I was beginning to worry about the decisions I had made. No land was visible, and my internal clock said I should have already arrived somewhere. I changed course, shading a few degrees off of the heading I had held since before midnight.

When the tide changed again so did the weather. A breeze followed the tide north, blowing out much of the fog.

A decent rifle shot off my port bow was a headland I hadn't known was there, and it took a few minutes with the chart before I concluded I was approaching Steep Cape. Nothing else on the west side of Afognak Island was anywhere near two thousand feet high, and time-traveled shouldn't have put me farther south than Afognak.

I felt a little better about where I was as I hooked around the cape and entered Raspberry Strait. I ran as far as Iron Creek before dropping anchor and getting some much needed sleep.

When I rounded Steep Cape, I didn't just feel a little better. I felt an immense sense of relief even though I ended up in the middle of a kelp bed that took an hour getting out. Dozens of sea otters looked at me like they had never seen a boat before, and perhaps they never had seen a boat in that kelp bed before. At any rate, I spent an hour with otters ten, twelve

feet from me. They dove, resurfaced with a crab, and held it in hand-like paws. They surfaced with a rock and a clam, laid the rock on their chest and beat the clam against it. They seemed to wave as if they knew me. And even though I was tired, I was impressed. I wouldn't have turned back for anything.

I didn't have enough fuel to turn back—

The builder of the *Bartender* hadn't installed any fuel gauges. I had no idea how much fuel I had consumed or how much I had left. I knew the little Jimmie shouldn't burn much more than two gallons per hour. I had taken aboard sixty gallons when I fueled at Homer before leaving. My best estimate was that I had twenty gallons left. I didn't know how long it would take to reach Kodiak from Raspberry Strait, but I knew I didn't have any money. I had to arrive in town with fish.

The halibut opening actually closed the evening of the day I arrived in Raspberry, but my gear wasn't ready to fish, nor was I when I arrived. I had no idea where to lay gear, nor had I ever laid gear. I was as green as a fisherman could be. ... Stretching the opening by a couple of hours, I got three skates baited, down and picked after getting an hour of sleep. I caught three fish weighing, in total, nearly two hundred pounds.

I sold those three fish to Pacific Pearl Seafoods for \$2.07 per pound. Of course they didn't pay me in dollars. Rather, I entered the world of cannery purchase orders (POs). But the fuel dock would take a PO, as would Krafts grocery; so tied to the transit float in Kodiak I waited out the closure. I had high hopes and nothing else to do.

My daughters had stayed with a fisherman at Ninilchik while I sailed to Kodiak. They now flew out to the island and joined their mother and me aboard the *Bartender* which we named the *Guppy* (out of water, the boat looked like a pregnant guppy thanks to its design modifications). The previous owner had called it the *Brave Susan*, but I didn't need a boat with the initials B.S.

We fished around Afognak Island during June and for the first half of July before the poundage quota for Pacific-caught halibut was met. The Bering Sea remained open, and I was again faced with the decision of whether I would stay where I was or continue farther west. I knew the *Bartender* was far too small to weather the storms of the mighty Bering Sea or so everyone I talked to told me. But I no real connection to Kodiak. We were living aboard the boat while tied to the transit float in the small boat harbor. We were literal sojourners. And I didn't have the ability to fish anything else but cod, which was then an iffy market at Kodiak. Canneries would only fool with cod when they weren't processing more valuable fish.

To digress for a moment: I encountered a phenomenon this summer of 1979 that I should have previously realized. Some of the first generation Norwegian skippers have a reputation within the fleet for bravery, for fishing weather that keeps every other vessel in port. In the *Guppy*, I couldn't get the marine weather forecasts: I had neither an AM radio, nor a particularly useful CB. As a result I never knew what the weather was supposed to be. I had to quickly learn to forecast my own weather, and most of the time I just didn't pay any attention to the weather. So I would

find myself fishing with these highliners whose reputations for bravery were truly impressive when most everyone else stayed in port. Of course, I wasn't as far off-shore as were those highliners.

What I realized was that the highliners didn't necessarily believe the weather forecasts. "Ve go out & see what it's like." And they would leave port and sail out to their fishing grounds. Once they were there, they would say something like, "Now that ve here, ve fish awhile." First thing they knew they had a full hold and an extra day of fishing over all of the boats that had stayed in port. They weren't braver than other skippers; they just didn't believe everything they were told. And I was out on those days because I didn't receive the forecasts that said to stay in port. I probably would have stayed in port if I had received those forecasts.

When halibut closed in the Pacific, I knew I had to keep fishing; I had to head for Dutch Harbor. Economics dictated that I head west. But I felt tremendous apprehension about sailing so far out with so small of a boat when I had been told I couldn't make it out there. I felt this apprehension until a fisherman in a chance conversation mentioned that another small boat had gone out to Unalaska two years earlier, that perhaps I should talk to the skipper of that boat to find out what I was up against. Good idea. I located that boat—it was a pile of floating junk. It was so unseaworthy that I wouldn't have taken it out of the harbor. And I realized then, while I staring at that boat, that I could make it. Sailing into the Aleutians became less a matter of courage than of again applying common sense to overcoming every obstacle I would encounter.

For this summer and the following year, my life was an actual voyage. The metaphor had lost its metaphoricalness. In quiet bays dressing halibut without another vessel in sight, or for that matter, not another human being other than a family member in sight, a healing of character can occur if it is allowed. But I was still on an outbound voyage. I hadn't yet turned around to challenge, say, your belief in escaping to heaven. I was content to keep going, to continue sailing towards tomorrow.

But the metaphor of voyage-as-life extends beyond tides and tidetables. My voyage begins with an early memory and lasts into the future. And as with that ancient Greek whose name I inherited from my dad, my voyage doesn't conclude in the Aleutians. Like salmon that migrate north, then return to the river of their nativity to spawn, the mature journey home, upstream against currents of politically correctness and bi-polar philosophies and one-eyed Cyclops, has only begun. Mom traced her lineage back to the preacher who preached the funeral for Mary, Queen of Scots. Perhaps I, too, will journey that far back towards my birth. Perhaps I, too, will preach.

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