

Commentary — From the Margins

A Fistful of Firstfruits

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land that I give you and reap its harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest, and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, so that you may be accepted. On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. And on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb a year old without blemish as a burnt offering to the Lord.” (Lev 23:9–12)

1.

Setting the sacred calendar has always depended upon being able to wave the first sheaf of the firstfruits in the season of the Passover, with the *firstfruits* usually identified as the barley harvest in Judea ... it is this identification of barley as firstfruits and Christians as firstfruits, with Christ Jesus as the First of the firstfruits that has allowed endtime disciples to understand that the resurrection which occurs at the Second Advent and the resurrection in the great White Throne Judgment are separate resurrections and are separated by the thousand long year reign of Christ Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. Christians in this era and all of humankind in the 1260 days of the Endurance are (will be) firstfruits and are represented metaphorically in Scripture by the early barley harvest of Judea. Those human beings who have not been born of God in this era and those who are born of God in the Millennium will be judged, or will have their judgments revealed in the great White Throne Judgment: they are represented by the main crop wheat harvest of Judea; they are metaphorically *wheat*..

The identification of disciples as *barley* as opposed to *wheat* sometimes hits snags such as in John 12:24, where σίτου—*sitou* is translated as “wheat” when the kernel of grain refers to Christ Jesus and the “much fruit” it produces if it falls to the ground and dies are disciples. The Greek word John records Jesus as uttering is not specific enough to limit the kernel to being “wheat” as opposed to “barley.” Jesus compared Himself to a kernel of grain, and it is the principle of dying then being born again in His disciples to produce more fruit like what died that is in play, for the purpose of ministry is “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Eph 4:12), with every disciple becoming a fractal image of Christ Jesus as one kernel of grain produces one stalk and seed head of many kernels that when each of these new kernels are planted produce a stalk and seed head, thereby growing Christendom exponentially. So what is translated into English as “wheat” can simply be any food grain.

Because Jesus metaphorically compared Himself to a kernel of grain, the figurative identification of disciples or of human beings as grain is well rooted in Scripture—and the rain that watered the hills of ancient Judea produced two grain crops a year, with the short season barley harvest occurring in the spring of the year, beginning shortly after the equinox and continuing for almost two months as barley matured from lower on hillsides [lower elevation] to higher on hillsides.

Ancient Judea did not have modern wheat varieties so whether wheat was a second crop planted in the same fields from which barley was harvested as could be done with soft wheat varieties or whether Judea's wheat was planted in the winter and did not ripen until mid-summer or later is more difficult to ascertain. What can be said, though, is that the barley harvest was dependent upon the early rains and the wheat was dependent on the latter or summer rains for the water needed to grow and ripen. Unlike in Egypt where crops were flood irrigated as they would have been in Mesopotamia—where water was delivered via irrigation canals and laterals that were opened and closed by the farmer's foot (Deut 11:10) [flood irrigation does not mean by river flooding, but by letting water flow from an irrigation ditch over a field as opposed to watering by sprinkling]—the crops of the Promised Land *drank water by the rain from heaven* (v. 11). And because the crops of Judea were dependent upon rain for the water necessary for growth, the Lord became a partner in the harvests of the land.

Moses tells the children of Israel on the plains of Moab,

And if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you today, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil. And He will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you shall eat and be full. Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them; then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain, and the land will yield no fruit, and you will perish quickly off the good land that the Lord is giving you. (Deut 11:13–17)

By withholding rain when it was the season for rain, the Lord could “speak” directly to the children of Israel. No prophets other than Moses were needed. The people had the words of Moses and they had the testimony of the Lord when the rains came in their due seasons, thereby making *rain in due season* and *teacher of righteousness* analogous to the παράκλητον—*parakletos/n*, the spirit of truth [πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας] that the world cannot receive (John 14:16–17) being the teacher of disciples.

As the children of Israel matured as a nation, the people of Israel were separated from the hills of Judea and went to lands where the Lord could not easily speak directly to the people who had long ago ceased listening to Him; who had not listened to Him in Egypt (Ezek 20:8), nor in the wilderness, nor at any time after the days of Joshua. Scripture records,

And the king [Josiah, in the days of Jeremiah] commanded all the people, “Keep the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant.” For no such Passover had been kept since the days of the judges who judged Israel, or during all the days of the kings of Israel or of

the kings of Judah. But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover was kept to the Lord in Jerusalem. (2 Kings 23:21–23)

Therefore, as in the example of Elijah the Tishbite, the Lord sent prophets to Israel to deliver His words:

Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, “As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.” And the word of the Lord came to him: “Depart from here and turn eastward and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. You shall drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.” So he went and did according to the word of the Lord. He went and lived by the brook Cherith that is east of the Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook. And after a while the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land. (1 Kings 17:1–7)

The authority the Lord had initially reserved to Himself to speak directly to the children of Israel in the Promised Land was given to His servants the prophets, and it was by the word of the prophets that Israel stood or fell, feasted or fasted ... when the prophet Malachi delivered the word of the Lord as he received it, he begins by recording the Lord’s words,

“I have loved you,” says the Lord. But you say, “How have you loved us?” “Is not Esau Jacob’s brother?” declares the Lord. “Yet I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert.” If Edom says, “We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins,” the Lord of hosts says, “They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called ‘the wicked country,’ and ‘the people with whom the Lord is angry forever.’” Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, “Great is the Lord beyond the border of Israel!” (1:2–5)

The Lord “spoke” to Esau, also a son of promise, about how Esau had kept the heritage he received from Abraham through Isaac by wasting his hill country. But Esau, instead of recognizing that the Lord was speaking to him, “talked back” to the Lord by rebuilding the shattered ruins and continuing in doing what he was doing before ...

When the children of Israel entered the Promised Land, according to the Lord, “They built the high places of Baal in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech, though I did not command them, nor did it enter into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin” (32:35); so the Lord said through the prophet Ezekiel, “I gave them statutes that were not good and rules by which they could not have life, and I defiled them through their very gifts in their offering up all their firstborn, that I might devastate them. I did it that they might know that I am the Lord” (20:25–26). The Lord persistently taught the people of Israel to walk in His statutes and to keep His Sabbaths, but the people would not listen to Him. They were like Esau in that they talked back by returning to their evil ways so *the Lord delivered statutes and rules to Israel that caused them to continue to do what defiled them so that they would be utterly condemned ...* because the children of Israel defiled themselves, the Lord gave them over to condemnation. And He made sure they stayed condemned in that He gave to these rebelling Israelites rules and statutes that had them

continuing to do exactly what they were doing to defile themselves. And this principle of God that is unchanging should frighten every Christian: about the man of perdition Paul writes, “The coming of the lawless one 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 emphasis added).

In the Tribulation, God condemns Christians by causing those who do not believe Him to continue doing what they are doing. The Lord defiled Israel by causing the children of Israel to continue offering their firstborn to Molech. And God will defile Christians who today profane the Sabbaths of God by sending over them a delusion that has them continuing to profane the Sabbaths of God, with—in the example year of 2011—Christmas occurring on a Sunday, being for those who are defiled a “proof” of the man of perdition’s “correctness” in having Christians worship God on *the day of the invincible sun*. And God will make the condemnation of those who follow the man of perdition permanent by sending a delusion over them so that they cannot believe what is true and turn to God and be saved.

The greater Christian Church today is as Esau was: even though it is still in the womb of Grace, it is hated for its lawlessness; its unbelief; its bad habit of talking back to the Father and telling Him how and when and who it will worship. So when the greater Christian Church is made alive by being filled with the divine breath of God, Christians will separate themselves into two factions, (1) those who are of the firstborn Esau and (2) those who struggled with their firstborn brother while still in the womb. And this separation will be made permanent by the Father sending a delusion over those Christians who did not love the truth now! ... Is this understandable? If you as a Christian do not today believe the writings of Moses and hear the words of Jesus (John 5:46–47) and believe the words of the Father, the words that Jesus spoke (*v. 24*), you are as Israel was when Israel first entered the Promised Land and offered their firstborns by fire to Molech. When liberated from indwelling sin and death at the Second Passover, your custom [tradition] will be to worship the Father and Son on Sunday. And because it has been your habit to worship on Sunday and keep Christmas and Easter, you will continue in this habit even after the law has been written on your heart and placed in your mind. So when the man of perdition is revealed as the lawless one, rather than believing God you will believe him and keep Christmas—and God will send over you a strong delusion that causes you to sincerely believe what is false as the Lord delivered to Israel rules and commandments that caused this physical nation to continue in their practice of burning alive their firstborn sons and daughters. You will, by keeping Christmas in the year of the Second Passover, condemn your inner new self that is a firstborn son of God to death in the lake of fire. May God have mercy on you that the death of your inner new self be quick.

There will be a lake of fire into which the lawless and unbelieving are cast when Christ returns, but those who are cast into this lake of fire will all be sons of God, either human or angelic. God has no desire—this said with the authority of the prophets—to torment His sons so their condemnation in the lake of fire will last no longer than it takes for fire to burn up wheat stubble.

The Lord spoke to both the descendants of Esau and to the children of Israel directly through droughts and destructions brought onto these peoples. When there became so great a “hearing” problem that droughts and destructions were not recognized as coming from the Lord, He sent the prophets to Israel, the early prophets and the later prophets. At the end of the age—in this age in which humankind presently dwells—God will again send prophets to Israel, then a nation circumcised of heart, and the prophets will deliver “meaning” to the already existing words of the Lord. And as Israel in Judea did not heed the words of the prophets, the greater Christian Church will not heed the endtime messages the servants of God deliver; for the Church’s condemnation is as certain as ancient Israel’s destruction is a historical fact.

Israel in Egypt forms the shadow and type, the left-hand enantiomer, of the greater Christian Church in this present, pre-Passover era, and Israel in Egypt would not listen to the Lord (Ezek 20:8),

Israel in the wilderness forms the shadow and type of the greater Christian Church post Second Passover, and Israel in the wilderness rebelled against the Lord at Sinai then again when the spies returned from Canaan. Except for Joshua and Caleb, no one numbered in the census of the second year entered the Promised Land.

And the children of Israel under Joshua in the Promised Land form the shadow and type of the third part of humankind in the Endurance.

As the greater Christian Church rebels against God 220 days into the Affliction, the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years, the third part of humankind will rebel against the Antichrist (used metonymically) 250 days into the Endurance, the last 1260 days of the seven endtime years. And when this third part of humankind (from Zech 13:9) rebels, they will have placed before them the spiritual equivalent to what Joshua placed before Israel:

[Thus says the Lord] “Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. And the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. And when they cried to the Lord, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness a long time. Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, and I gave them into your hand, and you took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you. Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and fought against Israel. And he sent and invited Balaam the son of Beor to curse you, but I would not listen to Balaam. Indeed, he blessed you. So I delivered you out of his hand. And you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho, and the leaders of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And I gave them into your hand. And I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out before you, the two kings of the Amorites; it was not by your sword or by your bow. I gave you a land on which you had not labored and cities that you had not built, and you dwell in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.” (Joshua 24:6–13)

The history of Israel's liberation from Egypt and that nation's journey through the wilderness forms the shadow and copy, left-hand enantiomer, of Christendom's liberation from indwelling sin and death and journey through the Affliction, the Tribulation.

Joshua continues,

Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. *Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord.* And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. (24:14–15 emphasis added)

It would seem that the children of Israel should have already put away the gods of Egypt, but the third part of humankind at this 250 day mark into the Endurance will still be worshipping demons as John records in his vision:

The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. (Rev 9:20–21 emphasis added)

And I saw a beast rising out of the sea ... to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and *the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"* (Rev 13:1–4 emphasis added)

As Christians in the great falling away rebel against God 220 days into the Affliction, the third part of humankind will rebel against the Adversary 250 days into the Endurance, which means that as Christians worship God when initially filled with the breath of God at the beginning of the Affliction, the third part of humankind worship demons when this third part is initially involuntarily born of God and filled with His breath at the beginning of the Endurance. The difference between rebellion 220 days into the Affliction and rebellion 250 days into the Endurance, the mirror image of the Affliction, places significance on the Passover (the 14th of Abib) of the year of the Second Passover, but because all that happens in this month of Abib is outside of the scope of John's vision, the Book of Revelation, a disciple must look to Daniel's vision in the third year of Belshazzar to "see" what occurs in the Abyss before the breaking of the first king of the king of Greece.

Returning to Joshua:

Then the people answered [Joshua, in Greek Ἰησοῦ—*Jesus*], "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods, for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples

through whom we passed. And the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

But Joshua said to the people, “You are not able to serve the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; *He will not forgive your transgressions or your sins*. If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good.” And the people said to Joshua, “No, but we will serve the Lord.” Then Joshua said to the people, “*You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him.*” And they said, “We are witnesses.” He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your heart to the Lord, the God of Israel.” And the people said to Joshua, “The Lord our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.” So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and put in place statutes and rules for them at Shechem. And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the Lord that he spoke to us. Therefore it shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God.” So Joshua sent the people away, every man to his inheritance. (24:16–28 emphasis added)

Disciples are today under grace, in that they are covered [clothed] in Christ Jesus’ righteousness, with Jesus being the reality of the *Azazel* goat that bears the sins of Israel in a far land [i.e., heaven]. His death at Calvary paid the death penalty for every sin that Israel commits/committed in this world, but once Israel is born of God, Israel can be guilty of unbelief in the heavenly realm ... in His sermon on the mount, Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery.” But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matt 5:27–28). Under the Torah, to look but not touch was not a transgression of the commandments, but when the old natural self is crucified with Christ and resurrected as an inner new self, a son of God born through receipt of a second breath of life, the breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], to look is the same as touching for in the mind, adultery has already been committed. Therefore, when a Christian man looks with lust at a woman or vice versa, sin was committed in the Abyss, the portion of the heavenly realm in which the creation exists, even though no sin was committed in this world. And the glorified Jesus as circumcised-of-heart Israel’s high priest bears these sins but does not pay their death penalty. He will, when He comes, either assign these sins to the Adversary, or will return them to the disciple, depending upon whether the disciple believes God when the disciple’s judgment is made, with this judgment revealed upon Jesus’ return.

Under grace, sins are not forgotten, but they are forgiven. However, following the Second Passover when the first covenant ends and the New Covenant is implemented, sins will not be remembered. For Christians, it will be as if no sin is committed; for it is unbelief (the root of sin) that is counted against the Christian. Therefore, the reality of what Joshua states—*He will not forgive your transgressions or your sins*—pertains not at a physical level but at a spiritual level, with transgressions and sins being the physical or outer expressions of inner unbelief. So for Christians in the Affliction and for the third part in the Endurance, God will not forgive “unbelief” when the Torah is written on hearts and placed into minds so that all *Know the Lord*.

When the Son of Man is revealed [disrobed] (Luke 17:30), the Son of Man will be stripped naked; the garment of grace will be taken from the Body of Christ that is also

the Body of the Son of Man. Disciples will be covered only by their own obedience—and disciples will be well able, when filled with spirit, to cover themselves with obedience, which is not now the case. The Second Passover liberation of Israel is about purging from every Christian all indwelling sin and death through the Christian, as if a vessel, being filled with and empowered by the breath of God.

As there is a day in the Affliction—this day being on or about Christmas of the year of the Second Passover—when the vast majority of Christendom rebels against God, there is a day in the Endurance when the vast majority of the third part of humankind rebels against the Adversary who has come, when cast from heaven (Rev 12:7–10), claiming to be the Messiah ... again, rebellion against God on day 220 mirrors rebellion against the Adversary on day 250. And the rebelling [against the Antichrist, used metonymically] third part of humankind will form the majority of the harvest of firstfruits of this earth. They are the barley that has been bought and sold by Sin, the third horseman, the third beast, the four-headed leopard. And none of this third part is today Christian. They are, instead, Muslim, Buddhist, atheist, even Jewish, but they are not Christians of any flavor. Why? Because Christians today, with no more exceptions than the seven thousand (Rom 11:4; 1 kings 19:18), do not believe the Father or the Son even about matters as simple as setting the calendar.

2.

The children of Israel followed Joshua into the Promised Land on the 10th day of the first month (Josh 4:19), the day when the Passover lamb was to be selected and chosen (Ex 12:2–6) ... the children of Israel were to be that paschal lamb, but Israel was a defiled nation that could not be offered to the Lord as a living sacrifice, a lamb without blemish. It is only the Passover Lamb of God that can be “waved” before God and accepted *as is*, as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering. This Lamb of God was the man Jesus of Nazareth, whose coming was as far in the future for the children of Israel as the restoration of the Church was in the future when the Apostle John died ... the Christian Church died spiritually when John, the last of the first apostles, died. And while the gates of Hades did not prevail over Jesus’ earthly body, the gates of Hades will not prevail over His spiritual Body. What was dead was resurrected after the third day, and what is dead will be resurrected after the third day of the spiritual creation week, the week of the Genesis chapter one creation account that has fruit bearing trees and plants yielding seeds created on the third day—this account has Christ Jesus being the light of Day One (2 Cor 4:6).

Although most Christians have assumed the Body of Christ would not die because Jesus said the gates of Hades would not prevail over the Church He built (Matt 16:18), that assumption would make true a false axiom, that to win a battle is to win a war. Death prevails when there is no resurrection from the dead; death did not prevail over Christ Jesus. Death will not prevail over the two witnesses. And death will not prevail over the saints. The man Daniel is promised that “many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan 12:2). Jesus said, “Do not marvel at this, for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment” (John 5:28–29). Death will not prevail over the saints, but death does win a battle when

a person dies. Likewise, the gates of Hades will not prevail over the Church, but death won a battle when all in Asia left Paul (2 Tim 1:15), when many who were disciples began to walk as enemies of the cross (Phil 3:18), when Jews sought Paul's life. The spirit quit being given; so when John, the last of the first disciples, dies at the end of the 1st-Century, that's it: the Body of Christ is dead although still hanging visibly in this world for all to see as Jesus' earthly body hung on the cross for two-plus hours before Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus laid it in the Garden Tomb. The Body of Christ is buried at the Council of Nicea (ca 325 CE), and buried when Emperor Constantine "suggested" that Christians should keep Easter rather than the Passover. From that point on, there was no Body of Christ to be seen in this world until the last Elijah lay over the corpse to breathe life back into the Church.

From when the last Elijah first laid over the dead Body of Christ to breathe life back into the corpse in the 16th-Century, Daniel's seventy weeks prophecy began, with the Church's restoration coming in a year near in time. If these seventy weeks represent 490 years, and if the restoration began when Radical Reformers first began to believe God and keep the commandments, then the Lord first laid over the Body of Christ as the man Elijah laid over the son of the widow of Zarephath in early 1528 CE when Andreas Fischer began to keep the Sabbath and teach others to keep the commandments, all of them. This would have, if these assumptions are true, Christ Jesus returning in 2018 and the Second Passover occurring in 2011, a year when Christmas falls on Sunday.

When the children of Israel entered the Promised Land, God's rest (from Ps 95:10–11), these children formed a mixed circumcised and uncircumcised nation. Those Israelite males who were born in Egypt but were less than twenty years old when Israel was numbered in the census of the second year were outwardly circumcised, but all of Israel born in the wilderness was uncircumcised as was the mixed multitude that came with Israel from Egypt. Therefore, the Moab covenant (Deut chaps 29–32) was made with circumcised and uncircumcised Israelites:

You are standing today all of you before the Lord your God: the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and the sojourner who is in your camp, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water, so that you may enter into the sworn covenant of the Lord your God, which the Lord your God is making with you today, that he may establish you today as his people, and that he may be your God, as he promised you, and as he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. It is not with you alone that I am making this sworn covenant, but with whoever is standing here with us today before the Lord our God, and with whoever is not here with us today. (Deut 29:10–15 emphasis added)

The people that God establishes under the Moab covenant as His people are not limited to those who are outwardly circumcised, but included the high and the low, male and female, circumcised and uncircumcised, born and unborn ... this Moab covenant is the addition to the first covenant by which hearts can be circumcised (Deut 30:6; 10:16). It is not a second giving of the Law, but a second Law. It is Paul's *righteousness based upon faith* (Rom 10:6), and its mediator goes from being the man Moses to being Christ Jesus, of whom both Moses and Joshua were types.

But the Moab covenant is not the New Covenant although it is a heavenly thing that is ratified by a song. It can be easily mistaken for the New Covenant—I made that mistake back in 2002—but the Moab covenant is a witness placed by the side of the Ark of the Covenant (Deut 31:26) that will testify against Israel before heaven and earth. It is like but not like the stone about which Joshua said, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of the Lord that he spoke to us. Therefore it shall be a witness against you, lest you deal falsely with your God” (24:27); for the Moab covenant “speaks” in the words of Moses against Israel, natural or circumcised-of-heart (John 5:45). The New Covenant brings no accusations against Israel. Like the stone of Joshua, by its largeness, the New Covenant “speaks” in the words of the Lord delivered as rain in due season, with this Teacher of Righteousness being Christ Jesus.

In the model Jesus gave of Him being a single kernel of grain falling to earth, sprouting, and from that single kernel a single stalk grows that bears a head of many kernels, the Body of Christ fell to the ground in the 1st-Century and was planted there in death by the Roman Emperor. That single kernel sprouted and pushed up leaves and tillers in the 16th-Century. The “jointing” and “boot” stages of growth extended through the 17th, 18th, 19th, and into the 20th Centuries. The “heading” stage was still ongoing when I was baptized into the Body of Christ almost forty years ago—that single plant stem is presently “flowering” and will soon be pollinated when disciples are filled with the breath of God. And from this single kernel planted so very long ago will come the seven named churches to whom messages have already been sent but not yet delivered.

3.

When the children of Israel entered into God’s rest, the first order of business was circumcision:

At that time the Lord said to Joshua, “Make flint knives and circumcise the sons of Israel a second time.” So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth. ... When the circumcising of the whole nation was finished, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed. And the Lord said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.” And so the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day. (Josh 5:2–3, 8–9)

Israel [i.e., the great Christian Church] when filled with spirit following the Second Passover will be as the children of Israel were when that nation crossed the Jordan: Israel will be a mixed nation of a few circumcised-of-heart disciples and many uncircumcised-of-heart Christians who must, by faith, follow Jesus [in Greek, Ἰησοῦ—*Joshua*, from Acts 7:45] into the Promised Land, God’s rest, represented by Sabbath observance. If these newly liberated Christians will not enter into Sabbath observance, they will remain on the metaphorical Moab side of the Jordan, and no Moabite will enter into the kingdom of God ... Ruth, a Moabite, crossed the Jordan with her mother-in-law Naomi and became a part of Israel in Judea when she married Boaz, the father of Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of King David. So regardless of where a person is “born,” the person cannot remain on the opposite side of the Jordan

but must cross over and appear before the Lord three times or at three seasons a year, and in appearing before the Lord, the person must be circumcised.

After the children of Israel had healed a little, the nation kept the Passover on the 14th day of the first month:

While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho. And the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the [old—*‘abuwr*] produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. And the manna ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. And there was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year. (Josh 5:10–12)

The timeline incorporated in the above passage has been used and misused to set the date for the Wave Sheaf Offering for a very long time, but it isn't to Joshua [again, Ἰησοῦ] where Christians go to establish when the first fistful of barley is to be waved before God, but to Jesus [Ἰησοῦ], who was the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering.

Joshua's timeline has Israel eating the Passover on the evening of the 14th, not on the 15th. Evening of the 14th is the dark portion of the 14th, not the dark portion of the 15th, the first High Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread; hence, the children of Israel on the following morrow ate old grain of the people of Canaan. They ate old or stored grain on the day portion of the 14th. But—and here is where problems enter in—manna stopped coming the day after the people ate the produce of the land, but this *produce* was not new grain.

The morrow or morning after when the Passover would have been eaten—Joshua knew when the Passover was eaten in Egypt—is the day portion of the 14th, the day when Israel in Egypt had spoiled the Egyptians. Israel left Egypt after spoiling the nation, after the firstborn of Egypt had been slain. Israel did not leave Egypt the night the nation ate the Passover, but the following night; for no Israelite was to leave their house the night the Passover was eaten. The nation didn't leave until the following night, the dark portion of the 15th, the first High Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And manna stopped coming on the 15th of Abib, not on the 16th. And no Wave Sheaf Offering was needed for the children of Israel to eat stored grain that they had not grown or harvested.

There was no Wave Sheaf Offering for this old grain [*‘abuwr* — Strong's #H5669] so manna ceased forty years after the Passover by which Israel was liberated from bondage to Pharaoh. But the stopping of manna does not mean that the Wave Sheaf Offering had occurred for the old produce of Canaan was not a harvest of firstfruits.

It is scholars' lack of perception that has caused too many Christians for too long to assume that the produce the children of Israel ate when manna stopped coming was new grain for which a Wave Sheaf Offering had to occur before it could be eaten.

Returning to what Moses delivered to Israel, disciples read, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, *When you come into the land that I give you and reap its harvest*, you shall bring the sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest” (Lev 23:10) ... the old or stored harvest of which Israel ate on the morrow after the Passover was not a harvest that the children of Israel reaped. When or even if Israel ate of the new grain harvest before Jericho fell is not recorded. For the people of Canaan, knowing that

Israel was coming—and knowing for decades that Israel was coming (Ex 15:15–16; Josh 2:8–11)—would most likely have prepared for a siege of long duration, storing grain as Israel would store grain for the year of Jubilee. Therefore, it is very probable that when Joshua wrote that Israel “ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year” (5:12), Israel only ate stored grain and no new grain throughout the first year; that the children of Israel ate as “firstfruits” the harvest of what they planted after the wars, of what they reaped the following spring.

To use the passage in Joshua to permanently set the Wave Sheaf Offering on the 16th of the first month comes from failure to understand who and what the firstfruits represent.

The harvest of firstfruits in God’s rest, with the children of Israel representing these firstfruits, was planted when the children of Israel were circumcised, with the first of this harvest not waved until the glorified Jesus ascended to the Father. And from that single seed has grown the single stalk that is now beginning to flower.

4.

The harvests of God are seen in type as the early and latter grain harvests of Judean hillsides, with the harvest of firstfruits not to begin before a sheaf of the firstfruits is waved before the Lord. “On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it” (Lev 23:11) ... but what day is *the day after the Sabbath*?

John writes about Christ, Οἱ οὖν Ἰουδαῖοι, ἐπεὶ παρασκευῆ ἦν, ἵνα μὴ μείνη ἐπὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ τὰ σώματα ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ, ἦν γὰρ μεγάλη ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνου τοῦ σαββάτου—*Therefore the Jews, since preparation [day it] was, that may not stay upon the stake the bodies during the Sabbath, was for great the day of that Sabbath* (19:31) ... John holds that the 15th of Abib, the first High Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, was the great day of that Sabbath, thereby making all of the Feast “Sabbath.” And on this particular Sabbath, the resurrected Jesus would ascend to the Father mid-week; i.e., in the morning of the fourth day or on the 18th of Abib, one day after the [weekly] Sabbath (John 20:1 *et al*).

For clarity, according to John all of Unleavened Bread was Sabbath, with the first day of Unleavened Bread being the great day of the Sabbath, and with there being a weekly Sabbath on the third day of Unleavened Bread in this particular year and with the seventh day of Unleavened Bread also being a High Sabbath. Before Unleavened Bread was the First Unleavened (Matt 26:17), of which the daylight portion was the Preparation Day for first High Day. This First Unleavened would have also been Sabbath; i.e., the night on which Passover was eaten according to the model established by Moses and by Joshua and by Jesus.

Because Pharisees did not eat the Passover on the 14th in the evening, but ate the Passover on the 15th in the evening doesn’t mean that Christians should follow the example of those who condemned Jesus. Nor should Christians follow the example of rabbinical Judaism of presenting the Wave Sheaf Offering on the fixed calendar day of the 16th of Nissan.

While the temple still stood, in the only year for which endtime disciples have a weekday to calendar date match, the resurrected Jesus as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering ascended to the Father one day after the Sabbath [how the Gospel writers

worded the phrase], in the morning, on the 18th day of Abib. On the Julian calendar then in use by the Roman world, Jesus ascended to the Father on 29 April 31 CE, a Sunday. He would have been crucified on 25 April 31 CE, a Wednesday, the 14th day of Abib, and the Preparation Day for the High Sabbath on 26 April 31 CE, Thursday, the 15th day of Abib. His body would have been placed in the Garden Tomb late on Wednesday, three days before the Sabbath, and His body would have been in the heart of the earth all day Thursday, two days before the Sabbath; all day Friday, one day before the Sabbath, then all day on the Sabbath, the 17th day of Abib, 28 April 31 CE Julian. So after being three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, Jesus was raised from the dead and gone from the tomb before dawn on the 18th of Abib, one day after the Sabbath.

When Israel was in Egypt, Israel did not keep the Sabbath; the nation was not free to do so. Therefore, one month after Israel's liberation manna was given, with manna appearing as hoarfrost for six days, but not being given on the seventh day, the Sabbath ... by the presence and absence of manna, the Lord "spoke" to Israel, telling the nation when the Sabbath was, testing the nation to see if the nation would listen to Him when the nation had not listened to Him in Egypt.

Jesus is the true "bread" that has come down from heaven ... whereas Israel did not recognize manna as anything (hence the name), Israel did not recognize Jesus as the only Son of *Yah*. To Israel, Jesus was the bastard son of a Galilean carpenter; to Israel, manna was worthless food (Num 21:5).

Scriptural references to bread are too numerous to examine, but "bread" is grain milled into fine flour, baked with oil. The processing of grain into flour represents the refinement or maturity of disciples who have grown in grace and knowledge; thus, the two loaves baked with leaven [sin, the baking killing the sin] that are to be waved before the Lord on the Feast of Weeks (Lev 23:15–17) represent the acceptance of glorified disciples on the fourth day.

As the presence and absence of manna established when the weekly Sabbath occurs, this seven day cycle unbroken since the days of Moses, the presence and absence of the true bread from heaven establishes when the annual Sabbath of Unleavened Bread is to occur, for Jesus' departure from earth and ascent to the Father one day after the [weekly] Sabbath—this after being three days in the heart of the earth—serves as the first ripe sheaf of barley of the new harvest. The harvest could begin, with disciples being the firstfruits that were to be harvested, and with the harvest ending on the Feast of Weeks.

Types lay over types, shadows over shadows. The harvest of Israel could not begin until Christ Jesus ascended to the Father as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering. In the approximately 1500 years between Moses and Jesus, no Israelite had indwelling eternal life and few received the promise of inheriting eternal life. In the approximately 2000 years since Jesus, few circumcised-of-heart Israelites have had indwelling eternal life and no Israelite other than Jesus has been raised from the dead. So for a period that can be described by *a time, times, and half a time*, with a "time" representing a millennium, only the true bread that came from heaven has ascended to heaven. The remainder of the firstfruits waits being harvested, thrashed, milled into fine flour, and baked into bread.

Time and the perceived passage of time are relational, with "stress" seeming to slow the passage of time, or inversely, heighten awareness of time so that time seems to slow

down. Either way, the effect is that events take longer to transpire when a person is under great stress. A person in the North Tower of the World Trade Center on 9/11 could read names on resumes that were flying across the room for the resumes seemed to be standing still, suspended overhead as they were flying across the office. In a personal incident, in a head-on traffic accident with a *Peterbuilt*, the last six feet—the six foot gap that separated the vehicles before impact seemed to take ten or more minutes to close when both vehicles were traveling at 35 mph. Thus, from the perspective of heaven as opposed to the perspective of human consciousness, the *time, times and half a time* that passes between Moses and the Second Passover is similar in perceived length to the *time, times, and half a time* that is the 1260 days of the Affliction—a thousand years of history will be as one year lived in the Affliction.

The harvest of the Promised Land grows over the course of one year, but not one calendar year. Rather the harvest of firstfruits grows from Passover to Passover—from the Israel's Passover exodus from Egypt to Israel's Passover liberation from sin and death. One year, half of one week without sin. The other half represented by the fifth, sixth, and seventh days of the spiritual creation week.

A farmer plants seed and waits ... and waits ... chops weeds and waits, watching leaves and tillers rolled close and shrivel while he waits for rain in its season to deliver life-needed water. Hot winds dry the soil's surface—and still the farmer waits as he walks rows, talking to God, asking for rain, the plants like children to him. At the field's edge, weeds flower, blue, yellow, white, some blossoms tiny, some large, bees working their blossoms. But the grain in the field is wind [πνεῦμα] pollinated, a play on Greek words that has the breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] bringing eternal life to disciples.

For the firstfruits, planted when Moses brought Israel forth from Egypt as a type and shadow of Christ Jesus bringing circumcised-of-heart Israel forth from Sin and Death, one year stretches from Passover to Passover ... what all of Israel awaits is the liberation of the Christian Church, when the flowering stalk of grain is pollinated by the breath of God.

With Christ Jesus as the true bread from heaven and the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering, and with His absence from Israel for the three days and three nights He was in the grave, the 15th of Abib of the year in which Jesus was crucified establishes when the 15th of Abib occurs year by year, with the month of Abib beginning with the first sighted new moon crescent following the spring equinox.

5.

When the children of Israel followed Joshua across the Jordan, they were all of Israel. There were no Israelites in Anchorage or in Oslo or in Christchurch or in Santiago or in Perth. There was no one keeping the Sabbath on Pacific Islands or keeping the Passover south of the Equator. Canaan/Judea was the center of the world, the location of “life,” represented geographically as a wedge of land sandwiched between Sin [Egypt] and Death [Assyria]. And it is in the weekly Sabbath where the limits of location are most easily observable.

Every discussion of the Wave Sheaf Offering starts with setting the calendar, with Christ Jesus' burial establishing the great day of the Sabbath ... contrary to the generality of encyclopedia articles that has Tiberius beginning to reign in 14 CE, Tiberius

actually began to reign as a co-equal to Augustus in 13 CE—and in the 15th year is after 14 years. So John the Baptist, who was about six months older than Jesus, began his ministry about Passover in 27 CE; Jesus would have begun His ministry about Fall Feast in 27 CE. Thus, a three and half year ministry would have Jesus crucified in 31 CE.

In 31 CE, the first new moon (dark of the moon) was at noon, 10 April (Julian), and no crescent would have been observable six hours later, on the evening of the 11th. Remember, the sacred calendar has evening beginning the day, not ending the day as evening does a Roman day—Hebrew is read right to left rather than from left to right as English or Greek is read. A person's thoughts are organized according to the person's first language; so while it is difficult for an Indo-European language speaker to think of evening beginning a day rather than ending a day, this is not a problem for Semitic language speakers. So in this paper, the evening of a stated calendar date is actually the evening of the previous day; e.g., the evening of the 11 April 31 CE begins six hours after noon on the 10th. The evening of 12 April 31 begins thirty hours after the dark of the moon occurs at noon on the 10th. And a thirty-hour-old new moon is old enough for its crescent to be seen. Thus, the 1st of Abib would begin approximately thirty hours after the dark of the moon on the 10th.

Disciples know that the temple set the calendar according to the first sighted crescent after the spring equinox for the only calendar date to weekday alignment that has the 15th of Abib occurring on a Thursday is in the year 31 CE. Whereas Judaism's calculated calendar will have the same alignment occurring in 30 CE, their calendar dating is off a day ... the equinox occurred at 10:00 pm on 22 March 30 CE. The dark of the moon occurred just before the equinox at 7:00 pm. Rabbinical Judaism's calendar has 23 March 30 being the 1st of Nissan. But the dark of the moon occurred approximately an hour after the evening of 23 March began, if the days are reckoned to begin at sunset. The new moon would have only been 23 hour old when the evening of 24 March began, but the new moon was probably old enough that it could be seen. Hence, 24 March 30 CE (Julian) should be the 1st of Abib, not the 2nd of Abib. And if the 24th is the first day of the year, then the 15th day of Abib would be a Friday, not a Thursday. So year 30 is ruled out, as are 32 and 33 CE—their day-to-date matches do not work out.

When disciples know when Jesus was crucified—and they do—then they also know that Jesus was not crucified in the fall of the year; He was the Wave Sheaf Offering, the First of the firstfruits. And both Passover and the Wave Sheaf Offering need to be observed in the spring of the year. To observe either in the fall is a theological error.

Earthly Jerusalem has no special significance to disciples. Paul wrote, "But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother" (Gal 4:26). Therefore, Christians do not look to earthly Jerusalem for sighted new moon crescents, but look locally—and when the year begins with the first locally sighted new moon crescent following the spring equinox, the equator forms a rough global seasonal dateline for establishing when the spring Sabbath occurs, a line akin to the International Dateline that establishes when the weekly Sabbath locally occurs.

From a previous commentary: "When possession of Alaska was formally transferred from Russia to the United States, the flag-raising ceremony took place on Friday, October 18, 1867 (Gregorian calendar), as the days and dates were calculated by the United States. However, in Sitka where the flag-raising ceremony occurred, the previous

day was Friday, October 6th (Julian). Thus, for Sitka residents, the week beginning with Sunday, October 1, 1867 (Julian calendar), saw two Fridays, one calculated from St. Petersburg's time when the territory belonged to Russia, and one calculated from Washington, D.C., when the territory changed ownership. But the seven day weekly cycle in neither St. Petersburg or in Washington, D.C., was broken. It was only broken on the other side of the world where Russia lay to the west of the International Dateline and the United States to the east.

“When Israel goes from being an outwardly circumcised nation to being the nation circumcised of heart, the land of Israel goes from being earthly Judea to being the globe, thereby making necessary an International Dateline to establish when the weekly Sabbath, based on the vertical rotation of the earth, occurs. Likewise, when the land of Israel encompasses the globe, a seasonal dateline becomes necessary to determine the annual Sabbaths of the year that are based on the horizontal tilt of the earth and the rotation of the moon. And as the International Dateline is a broken line of longitude, with jogs to accommodate national sovereignty, the seasonal dateline when finally established and universally recognized will be a broken line of latitude, above which the same sacrifices will be offered during the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread as are then offered below this line during the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles (see Ezek 45:21–25). Thus, the spring Sabbath will be held in the spring of the year and the fall Sabbath will be held in the fall of the year. No more will the people of God appear before the Lord to observe the Passover when apples are being picked.

“However, until the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man, setting the calendar will be an unsettled issue within the Body of Christ, but not among the oil and the wine ... no person on the other side of the world from earthly Jerusalem can truly keep the Passover at the same hour as when sons of God in earthly Jerusalem eat the offering—when the First Unleavened [Passover] begins in earthly Jerusalem, it is still the preparation day for this First Unleavened in Nome, Alaska. Likewise, no person can truly keep the Passover during the fall harvest season; for the Wave Sheaf Offering, always made on the day after the Sabbath during Unleavened Bread, represents acceptance by God of the first sheaf of ripe barley of the year, with this handful of barley representing the First of the firstfruits, Christ Jesus. The Body of Christ is the firstfruits, and the Body is not resurrected to glory when, figuratively, dry beans are combined. But with God, there is neither day nor night, spring nor fall, for God gives the land its light, with this land being the mental landscape of disciples.”

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