

Commentary — From the Margins *Alpha & Omega* Part Six: Vaccinated Against Legalism

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When Jesus told Sadducees who studied Scripture daily that they neither knew Scripture nor the power of God (Matt 22:29), Jesus went on to say that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was the God of living ones, not the God of dead ones, meaning that if any resurrection of the dead were to occur as Pharisees believed, there had to be a second deity, one unknown to Israel and to the patriarchs of old, with this second deity being to the God of living ones as the right hand is to the left hand. What Jesus told these Sadducees astonished them; for within Israelite theological discourse, monotheism had gone unchallenged since the days of Abraham, who had given a tithing of everything he recovered when he defeated the four kings to Melchizedek, king of Salem, and about whom the writer of Hebrews says,

And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt Himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by Him who said to Him,

"You are my Son,
today I have begotten you";

as He says also in another place,

"You are a priest forever,
after the order of Melchizedek."

In the days of His flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to Him who was able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverence. Although He was a son, He learned obedience through what He suffered. And being made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. (Heb 5:4–10 double emphasis added)

Jesus, according to the author of Hebrews, did not pray to the God of Abraham, the God of living ones, but prayed to the God of dead ones, the God able to raise the dead to life, the God Israel never knew and the God greater Christendom today doesn't know.

In His prayer that John's Gospel records, Jesus prayed,

Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify You, since You have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I glorified You on earth, having accomplished the work that You gave me to do. And

now, Father, glorify me in Your own presence with the glory that I had with You before the world existed. (John 17:1–5 emphasis added)

In Jesus' prayer, Jesus acknowledges that He is unable to give indwelling eternal life to anyone the Father, the God of dead ones, has not given to Jesus, thereby reinforcing what Jesus had previously said about no person being able to come to Him unless drawn by the Father (John 6:44, 65), and about the Father raising the dead (John 5:21).

Moses [the name meaning, *the Son*] did not make himself the high priest of Israel; for Moses was elevated to a position analogous to the God of Abraham when the Lord tells him,

Then the anger of [YHWH] was kindled against Moses and He said, "Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both what to do. He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and **you shall be as God [YHWH] to him**. And take in your hand this staff, with which you shall do the signs." (Ex 4:14–17 double emphasis added)

In the received Hebrew, it isn't that Moses shall be "as God" to Aaron, but that Moses and Aaron shall be as YHWH, with Moses telling Aaron what to say as if Aaron were Moses' mouth in a manner analogous to Jesus speaking only the words of the Father during His ministry. The forty years of separation represents a lifetime; so Moses is to Aaron as the glorified Son of God (inner and outer selves) is to still-physically-living sons of God, who have glorified inner selves [souls or spirits] but dead outer selves that either remain physically living or have returned to dust.

When Jesus told Sadducees, who knew Scripture as well as anyone in Judaism, that they neither knew Scripture nor the power of God, Jesus meant what He allegedly said; for no one who didn't know the Father really knew or understood Scripture, much of which was written in poetic thought-couplets that in Hebrew caused words to be as fleshly bodies are/were in that they are only brought to life through the addition of aspiration (breath) ... Hebrew is a partially alphabetized language written only in consonant clusters, with consonants tending toward silence, death. A consonant is produced by interrupting a vowel stream at a particular location. The vowel stream represents life that comes from breath. If held to fruition, a consonant produces absolute silence as death comes when a person ceases to breathe. Thus, inscribed Hebraic words are always dead until voiced through the addition of breath—vowel pointing—to the consonant clusters.

A Hebraic thought-couplet presents a dead representation of a physical state or concept, followed by a dead representation of the spiritual state or concept; thus an un-vocalized thought-couplet in Hebrew becomes analogous to the two sets of stone tablets Moses lugged down from atop Mount Sinai, the first set crafted by the Lord, the second set crafted by Moses. Upon the first set, the Lord wrote with His finger the Law. Upon the second set, Moses [*the Son*] chiseled the

Law with his hand. Same Law. Not a different Law. Only who did the work of producing the stone tablets changed.

Just as a poetic thought-couplet presents the same information twice, the first time in a physical application, the second time in a spiritual application, the two tablets of stone (four tablets in actuality) represented a ministry of death (2 Cor 3:7) because the material (substance) upon which the Law was written was itself dead, and no amount of vocalization (aspiration) could bring the stone tablets to life. But the Apostle Paul wrote,

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you, or from you? You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all. And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, **not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.** (2 Cor 3:1–3 double emphasis added)

Under the New Covenant, the Second Passover covenant, human hearts replace stone tablets as the surface upon which the Law is written; for the author of Hebrews, citing the prophet Jeremiah (31:31–34), writes, “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel / after those days, declares the Lord: / I will put my laws into their minds, / and write them on their hearts, / and I will be their God, / and they shall be my people” (Heb 8:10).

But the Law, initially uttered by the God of Abraham from atop Mount Sinai and then spoken by Moses to the children of Israel on the plains of Moab, was twice written on stone tablets while the people of Israel were encamped at the base of Mount Sinai. This same Law will be twice written on the hearts of the circumcised-of-heart Israel, once before the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man and then a second time after the kingdom is delivered to Christ, Head and Body. And the analogy holds concerning who does the work of writing, inscribing the Law on hearts: the first time, this inscription is by God on hearts prepared by God to receive the Law. The second time (after the kingdom is delivered to Christ), the work of inscribing the Law is done by the Son, not by God the Father ... the third part of humankind that is represented in Zechariah 13:9 are not foreknown by the Father, predestined, called, justified, and glorified by the Father (Rom 8:29–30) before the kingdom is delivered to Christ. This third part is randomly selected from those who were not previously “Christians”; this third part consists of human persons who are not firstborn and who were not killed during the Affliction, when a fourth of humankind was delivered into the hand of death, followed by a third part slain in the Second Woe. In actuality numbers, this third part will consist of about 2.4 billion human persons who do not today self-identify themselves as Christians, and this third part will be traumatized beyond anything that can be imagined by the deaths of so many others.

In the Sadducees not knowing Scripture even though they studied Moses, the Writings, and the Prophets diligently, these Sadducees are analogous to today’s Christians in greater Christendom. A veil of death conceals God and what God is doing from the minds and hearts of Christianity; that is, Christians virtually

without exception still have dead inner selves, euphemistically dead “spirits” or “hearts” that remain consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32), thereby causing them to be children of disobedience (Eph 2:2–3). These Christians reveal their dead inner selves in various ways, from having no love for their brothers to keeping Sunday as the Sabbath to keeping the high Sabbaths of Judaism instead of the high Sabbaths of the Father and the Son. And because the inner selves of these Christians are dead from want of a second breath of life, they do not and indeed cannot understand the things of God.

Realizing that the Law is twice uttered—once by the Lord from atop Mount Sinai, and once by Moses on the flat plains of Moab—and that the Law was twice inscribed at Sinai, once by the Lord and once by Moses, and that the Law was once inscribed by Moses on the plains of Moab in the Book of Deuteronomy (a point Paul neglects in his letter to the saints at Corinth), the endtime Sabbatarian Christian should also realize that the Law must twice be written on hearts, with the first time coming via the Elect reading what Moses wrote in a book, not on lost tablets of stone, and with the second time coming from the glorified Christ writing the Law on the hearts of unbelieving Christians and non-Christians during the Tribulation.

With few exceptions, it will do the glorified Christ no good to write the Law on the hearts of unbelieving Christians at the Second Passover liberation of Israel: these unbelieving Christians have been “vaccinated” by their pastors against keeping the Law, the vaccination developed through nearly two millennia of trials and testing. Thus, placing the Law in the minds and writing the Law on the hearts of traditional Christians will produce the Apostasy or great falling away of 2 Thessalonians 2:3. But liberation of greater Christendom from indwelling sin and death at the Second Passover remains necessary ... just as only Joshua and Caleb of the men of Israel numbered in the census of the second year entered the Promised Land—the remainder of the men numbered in this census perished in the wilderness—a few of today’s Christian Church will have a different spirit about them, a spirit or heart that is receptive to truth (a heart in which the anti-Law vaccination failed to produce its desired effect). And these few are to Christ worth going after to save; for Christ remains Israel’s shepherd, the Good Shepherd that goes after lost sheep, even if only one or two are to be found.

But in Christ going after the lost sheep of the house of Israel in the Affliction, these lost sheep will make a journey of faith during which they will, almost without exception, lose their physical lives. Thus, only a remnant of Israel—Christians who keep the commandments and have the spirit of prophecy—will cross from the present age in which the Adversary reigns as the prince of this world into the coming age in which the Son of Man will reign as the prince of this world and prince of the power of the air. And the two witness wear rough clothing for they know in advance that very few of today’s Christians will enter the Kingdom. Most are immunized against submitting to Christ Jesus; against living in this world as an observant Judean; against walking as Jesus walked, or following Paul as he followed Jesus. The vaccine developed against “legalism” will prove to be even more effective than anticipated.

The principle of left and right handedness as pertains to thought-couplets and as made apparent by Moses in bringing down from Sinai two sets of two stone tablets, the first being entirely the work of the Lord and the second being the work of Moses, with the words Moses inscribed having been dictated by the Lord—this principle of left and right handedness causes the Book of Exodus and all that happens at Mount Sinai to form the left hand image and copy of the Book of Deuteronomy and all that happens on the plains of Moab (backing up to Numbers chapters 26 & 27, and the daughters of Zelophehad inheriting as if they were sons). However, this same principle undergirds Matthew's Gospel and is expressed in Jesus declaring that He is the *Alpha* [A] and the *Omega* [Ω], the beginning and the end in John's vision.

In Matthew's Gospel, when Jesus sends forth the Twelve, saying to them, Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death, and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But *the one who endures to the end will be saved*. (Matt 10:16–22 emphasis added)

Jesus does so in what is the first half of Matthew's Gospel, in the *Alpha* portion that is equivalent in Christians' journey of faith to Israel in Egypt. Then in the second half of his Gospel, Matthew has his Jesus closely repeat what He said early in His ministry:

Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But *the one who endures to the end will be saved*. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (Matt 24:9–14 emphasis added)

This repetition is intentional; for the message (good news or gospel) that has been previously proclaimed must be proclaimed again

Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. And he said to me, "Take and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it. It was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. And I

was told, "You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings." (Rev 10::8–11)

The prophesying to all peoples to which the angel referred—and that must be repeated—occurred prior to the Affliction, the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years. The work of the Apostles is two works that form one work, an earlier and a latter work, with the earlier work forming the left hand enantiomer of the latter work.

Possession of the mythical *Key of David* produces the understanding that the principles embedded in Hebraic thought-couplets, the basic structure of King David's poetry, pertain to all of Scripture: there is a first Sinai covenant (Ex chaps 20–24) that occupies the physical/physical [p-p] position in a doubled thought-couplet, and there is a second Sinai covenant (Ex chaps 33–35:3) that occupies the physical/spiritual position of a doubled thought-couplet. Then there is the Moab covenant (Deut chaps 29–32) that occupies the spiritual/physical position of a doubled thought-couplet, followed by the still-to-be-given covenant that the Lord makes with the third part of humanity (from Zech 13:9) when the single kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man. This is the covenant—an eternal gospel—the first angel proclaims to "those who dwell on earth" of "every nation and tribe and language and people" (Rev 14:6), and this covenant's simple message ("Fear God and give Him glory ... worship Him who made heaven and earth" — v. 7) is the reality that casts as its shadow what the Apostle Paul identifies as "the righteousness based on faith" (Rom 10:6 — cf. Rom 10:6–8; Deut 30:11–14).

Deuteronomy differs from Exodus as a person's right hand differs from the person's left hand. The fulcrum upon which the writings of Moses balance is in Numbers where the nation of Israel that left Egypt, except for Joshua and Caleb—the nation numbered in the census of the second year—is rejected and replaced by the children of this rejected nation, with the children numbered in the census taken on the plains of Moab (Num 26:3). Thus, Israel in the wilderness of Sinai (Num 1:1) forms the physical shadow and copy of Israel (i.e., the children of Israel) on the plains of Moab, with Israel in Egypt forming the physical shadow and copy of Israel in the Promised Land. Hence, Christians in this present era form the spiritually lifeless shadow and copy of glorified Christians in heaven, while the Elect in the present era (all of whom will be Sabbatarian Christians) equate to Moses either before he slew the Egyptian, or to Moses the fugitive, or to the returned Moses who was called by the Lord to deliver Israel from slavery.

The fulcrum upon which Matthew's Gospel balances (as well as Mark's Gospel) is Jesus' interaction with the Canaanite woman:

And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon." But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before Him, saying, "Lord, help

me." And He answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly. (Matt 15:21–28)

In Mark's Gospel, this incident is described as follows:

And from there He arose and went away to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and did not want anyone to know, yet He could not be hidden. But immediately a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit heard of Him and came and fell down at His feet. Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by birth. And she begged Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. And He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." But she answered Him, "Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." And He said to her, "For this statement you may go your way; the demon has left your daughter." And she went home and found the child lying in bed and the demon gone. (Mark 7:24–30)

What was for the lost children of Israel (healings and the message) that could not before be given to Gentiles—Luke's Gospel is problematic for it is uninspired, the production of someone who had read what others had written and the production of a person who did not understand the *Key of David*—is given to the Canaanite woman because of her faith; because she had a different spirit about her, a spirit that did not take offense when called a bitch. In other words, she went against what would have been "natural" for her to say when compared to a dog, and she replied in a way that was *unnatural*.

Not only was the woman a Gentile, she was also female, meaning that she truly would have had no standing in Israel: to male Jews, she would have been as a beast of burden, a dog at best. But with the healing of her daughter that follows Jesus addressing what defiles a person, *Israel* has moved from being a physical people to being the nation of living inner selves of any physical people. The barrier of outward circumcision has been broken ...

But Paul wrote,

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances,

that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. (Eph 2:8–16)

If the hostility caused by circumcision of the flesh was abolished by Christ Jesus' death and resurrection, then in an odd way Jesus' resurrection occurs not at the end of Matthew's and Mark's Gospel where we read the account of the crucifixion, but earlier, meaning that the accounts of the crucifixion that we read—that seem literal—actually pertain to a different *Jesus*, the physical man, not the indwelling Jesus that is within each disciple truly born of spirit. And that is what's at work: the glorified Jesus dwells within every disciple born of spirit, and this disciple must crucify the flesh (that is, resist the desires of the flesh with a resistance that if physical would be unto the death of the flesh) or be figuratively crucified in the premature death of the flesh.

When camped around the base of Mount Sinai, outwardly circumcised Israel experienced sin as a living enemy determined to devour this firstborn son of the Lord. After the Second Passover liberation of circumcised-of-heart Israel, Sin (as if a demonic prince) will devour this latter nation of Israel; for its vaccination against *legalism*—like the Ghost Shirts of Lakota peoples worn at Wounded Knee—will not protect Christians from being consumed by evil ... no temple garment other than obedience to the commandments will protect pious wearers from evil.

The people of ancient Israel gathered themselves against Aaron and demanded that Aaron make *elohim* [gods] to go before them for Moses was nowhere to be seen ...while Moses was in the cloud, Moses was to the people of Israel as Christ Jesus presently is to Christians. Moses could not be seen, and the people didn't know what had become of him (Ex 32:1). So instead of continuing in the covenant that the people of Israel swore that they would do (Ex 24:3), the people of Israel abandoned Moses [*the Son*], the representative of the Lord, and sought other gods after which they could follow.

The above discloses problems inherent with English translations of Exodus 4:16 ... Moses and Aaron, together, were as *YHWH* was, with Aaron being the mouth-of or *logos* for Moses, and with Moses and Aaron, together, forming the shadow and copy of the endtime two witnesses, with these two witnesses being brothers, but with the younger (as opposed to the elder) being the spokesperson for other. Moses isn't merely as a god to Aaron, but Moses and Aaron are as *YHWH*, Israel's *Elohim*.

Thus, was it even possible for a gold calf made from recast gold earrings—from the gold adorning the ears that heard the Lord utter living words of life—to lead the people of Israel into a land flowing with milk and honey? No, it was not possible. The gold heard nothing when the ears of the people heard the living words of the Lord. A deity made from the gold attached to these ears was without life; was for the people of Israel like the deities of the Canaanite peoples they were to dispossess.

But what possessed the people of Israel at the base of Mount Sinai into believing that a gold calf or calves could possibly lead the people into a Promised

Land that was occupied by giants ... once the Law brought sin to life, the gold deity made from earrings that heard living words seemed to acquire life; for this deity caused the Lord's wrath to burn hot against the people of Israel. The Lord became determined to consume the people and to make from Moses a great nation, a decision that He implemented through Christ Jesus (*cf.* Ex 32:9; John 5:46–47). Moses pleaded with the Lord, asking Him to spare the life of the people, and the Lord didn't immediately bring upon the people of Israel the disaster He had declared, but He never changed His mind about making from Moses a nation greater than Israel. The Lord simply waited for sin to complete its work of devouring the people of Israel.

The ghost shirts that Christians within greater Christendom wear as temple garments cause these Christians not to fear the Lord, or fear transgressing His commandments ... the Christian who claims not to be under the Law, or the Muslim or Buddhist not under the Law will nevertheless perish without the Law if this person does what is evil. Said without caveat.

Modern multiculturalism doesn't negate the existence of evil. Although death reigned over all flesh from Adam to Moses (Rom 5:14), who brought Sin to life so that it could be seen and defeated, death continues to reign over those human persons not under the Law: the Christian who claims not to be under the Law either will succumb to evil and will perish for having done so, or this Christian will fight against an undefined, faceless and formless enemy until filled with spirit [the breath of God] at the Second Passover liberation of Israel, when the Law will be written on hearts and placed in minds so that all know the Lord, thereby giving definition (and form) of sin.

Sin slew the people of Israel the moment this people ceased to believe the Lord; for the innocence of child-like belief of God can never be restored. Once innocence—like virginity—is lost, it is forever lost. While a person who has turned away from God can be restored to God, the innocence of first love will have fallen victim to unbelief, sin, and the restored person even without additional transgressions of the Law will not again be a spiritual virgin. Even when the sins of the person are covered by the blood of Christ, these sins mar the conscience of the person: the man or the woman knows where he or she has fallen short of perfection ... the flesh stands condemned by sin, knowing that it will die, devoured while physically alive. But for the Elect, the living inner self of the person has been freed from sin and death through being born anew, born from above. The living inner self is not born consigned to disobedience and therefore devoured by sin. Rather, the living inner self will keep the commandments that the flesh could not do because it was devoured by sin when all humanity was consigned to disobedience and by extension, to unbelief.

Ancient Israel at Sinai didn't believe the Lord and therefore perished because of the nation's unbelief (Heb 3:19). This nation was not permitted to enter into God's rest (Ps 95:11); however, the children of Israel followed Joshua across the Jordan and into the Promised Land where the children of Israel represented the chosen Passover lamb of the Lord. Unfortunately, the children of Israel were not without blemish: the children of Israel rebelled against the Lord as their fathers

had. This second Israel did not walk in the statutes of the Lord; they profaned the Sabbaths of the Lord (Ezek 20:21). They were their fathers' sons and daughter—and while they claimed the Lord as their Father, they were instead children of the Adversary.

The Apostle John writes about disciples:

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure. 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. For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. (1 John 3:1–11)

No vaccination against *legalism* will protect a son of the devil from death in the lake of fire; no ghost shirt will protect a Christian who transgresses the Law from death in the lake of fire. Only keeping the commandments because the person not under the Law desires to walk in this world as Christ Jesus walked in this world will keep this person from becoming ashes in a second death.

Ancient Israel in the Promised Land did not believe the Lord, nor really acknowledge the Lord as their Father. This nation of Israel made no distinction between evil and sin that was a living entity brought to life by the Law. There was no recognition that evil existed long before sin was given life and by extension, form and definition ... the Law doesn't negatively define evil, but instead gives life to unbelief (i.e., establishes the parameters for unbelief). Even when the children of Israel in the Promised Land, thinking they believed the Lord, covered their sin through the added animal sacrifices, this people was mired in evil.

The unintended multiculturalism of the children of Israel permitted this people to worship the deities of the Canaanite peoples they were to dispossess—whereas the Lord warned Israel at Sinai against corrupting itself by worshiping images of any living creature or anything that was physical, the Lord seems to have allowed common humanity to worship the sun, moon, stars, the host of heaven:

And [YHWH] commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and rules, that you might do them in the land that you are going over to possess. Therefore watch yourselves very carefully. Since you saw no form on the

day that [YHWH] spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, beware lest you act corruptly by making a carved image for yourselves, in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth. And *beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that [YHWH] your [Elohim] has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven.* But [YHWH] has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day. (Deut 4:14–20 emphasis added)

For the children of Israel, worshiping any physical thing was both sin and evil:

Take care, lest you forget the covenant of [YHWH] your God, which he made with you, and make a carved image, the form of anything that [YHWH] your [Elohim] has forbidden you. For [YHWH] your [Elohim] is a consuming fire, a jealous God. When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of [YHWH] your [Elohim], so as to provoke him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. And [YHWH] will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where [YHWH] will drive you. And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. (Deut 4:23–28)

So while common humanity worshiped sticks and stones and the host of heaven (they could not know God because He had hid Himself from them so as not to contaminate the demonstration He permits the Adversary to run) common humanity did not have sin counted against it because Gentiles were not under the Law (Rom 5:13). However, this does not mean that the Lord winked at the idolatry of those individuals not under the Law. Rather, they will perish because of the evil they do. They were/are without excuse for their idolatry (Rom 1:20).

Although the nations' worship of idols was not counted against them as sin (for them, sin remained dead, without form and definition), the evil common humanity did and continues to do because of being consigned by God to disobedience from birth prevents them from having indwelling eternal life ... no Muslim is born with an immortal soul. No Christian is humanly born with an immortal soul. No Hindi is reincarnated. These are lies told by the Adversary and his angels to placate human curiosity.

Even though common humanity today cannot know the Lord because He chooses not to reveal Himself to them, the ancestors of common humanity did not seek the Lord when He could have been found by them; thus, the thoughts of these ancestors became futile. They received reprobate minds, exchanging the truth about God for a lie, worshiping and serving the creature rather than the Creator (Rom 1:25). They exchanged (and are exchanging) natural relations for

unnatural relationships, women laying with women as they would lay with men, and men with men as they would lay with women (*vv.* 26–27). They are filled with all manner of evil; for they know God’s decree against the things they do, but they not only continue in their evil practices, but openly do so thereby approving unrighteousness.

The Lord permitted nations and peoples consigned to disobedience to do what seems “natural” to these brute beasts, but He made a distinction between ancient Israel and their neighbors, a distinction that foreshadowed the distinction that should exist between Christians and their neighbors

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