

Commentary — From the Margins

Anathema

[Part Four]

I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. (Rom 16:17–18)

4.

When the Christological debates of the 4th-Century CE developed, even Arian Christians had abandoned the Sabbath, with abandonment of Sabbath observance indirectly preventing these Arian Christians [as well as Trinitarian Christians] from understanding “when” the <Only Begotten> was “begotten” by the <Unbegotten> ... the Apostle Paul identified the Law as a schoolmaster or guardian (Gal 3:24) before grace came, with “grace” being the the garment of Christ Jesus; being the “covering” of Christ’s righteousness; being the “mantle” of righteousness that causes God and angels to “see” Christ Jesus when looking at the disciple.

The *Beloved* was “the Beloved of God” before He became the *Firstborn Son of God*, with the naming noun “God” presenting unintended and usually unidentified linguistic problems; for <God> when used without a qualifier such as “Most High” or “Almighty” becomes a <Kingdom> as this naming noun is used in scientific classification of plants or animals. And this Kingdom of God presently is one Order [the Father and His Firstborn Son], but two Families [human sons of God, plus angelic sons of God]. And in the Family of human sons of God, there are two Subfamilies: the Elect [humans presently born of spirit through the indwelling of the spirit of Christ], and those persons who are “sanctified” but not yet born of spirit. It is in this latter Subfamily where most Christians within greater Christendom presently reside—and will continue to reside until the winnowing process produced by the Affliction [the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years of tribulation] and by the Endurance of Jesus [the last 1260 days of these seven endtime years] sorts out rebels from the faithful ... an additional Subfamily of human sons of God will be created by the great White Throne Judgment following the Thousand Years of Christ Jesus’ reign over living creatures theologically known as the Millennium.

The *Beloved* created all that is physical before He entered His creation as **His** unique Son (John 3:16)—the “only” Son of Himself ... He could not enter His creation a second time for to enter He had to divest Himself of His divinity. He had to die spiritually; He

had to give up the glory He had when He created the world. And this is not how greater Christendom understands Christ Jesus.

The *Beloved* had His own glory—His own “life” outside of the creation; outside of space-time—before He entered His creation. And as the man Jesus, He asked to have this “glory” returned to Him, with John’s Gospel recording Jesus’ prayer to the Father:

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)

The *Beloved*, also identified as <Yah> in the linguistic determinative <YHWH> and as the Logos <’o Logos> in John’s Gospel, had His own glory or “spirit” before He entered His creation as His unique Son. This will now have the deity Christians identify as <God the Father> having His own glory or spirit before the *Beloved* entered His creation, again not as the Firstborn Son of the Father but as the unique Son of Himself ... in the classification of “Kingdom,” there is only one *God*, but there are two living entities in this classification: previously, the Father and His Beloved; now, the Father and His Firstborn Son, who reentered heaven via receiving the indwelling glory or spirit of the Father when the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the bodily form of a dove descended upon and entered into the man Jesus following John raising Him from the watery grave of baptism in the Jordan.

To enter His creation, the *Beloved* had to become a man like other men, only without being of Adam; being “fathered” by Adam and thereby consigned to disobedience. Again, His Father when He entered His creation was Himself, the *Beloved* of God. The Logos [’o Logos]. The *I AM* with whom Moses met, with <Moses> as a naming noun carrying the meaning of “son of” or “born of” *I AM*, with the *bilabial consonant* of *I AM* [the *mem*] pulling double duty, representing both the One who fathers Moses as well as the beginning letter of the suffix representing *born of*. And because of the connection of the *mem* consonant image to water [one wave following another wave in a series of vertical peaks], the *Beloved* could remain concealed from humanity’s perception in Moses’ name.

The preceding is simple and not difficult to understand. However, Israelite scribes in transcribing proto Hebraic script into Imperial Hebrew text caused a virtually limitless number of difficulties by transforming the linguistic determinative <YHWH> into a naming noun, then redacting Moses’ writings and the histories to reflect the singleness assigned to this determinative ... Christians have not received an authentic copy of Moses’ writings, but have received a redacted copy, with the plurality inherent to the linguistic icon <Elohim> and to the determinative <YHWH> compromised by Hebraic scribes intent upon returning the remnant of Israel that remained together to a purity of faith that Israel never had. For while in Babylon, the captives from the House of Judah and Jerusalem made monotheism their idol. Instead of worshiping many heathen idols, they turned to worshiping a single idol: monotheism. Their new idol wasn’t Scripture, nor the God of Abraham, but the concept of monotheism, with this idol picked up by early Christian converts and carried to all parts of the world, then when the “Christian”

movement figuratively ran out of gas, picked up by the prophet Mohammad and carried by his followers across North Africa in a hundred years of aggressive expansion.

Today, both the Islamic Republic [Iran] and the Islamic State [ISIS] can serve God as ancient King Nebuchadnezzar served as an agent of the *Beloved* (Jer 25:9). But as Nebuchadnezzar deprived Judah and Jerusalem of its freedom to practice its own version of idolatry, Islamic fundamentalists would deprive greater Christendom as well as literal humanists of their freedom to continue in their idolatrous ways ... under Islamic fundamentalists, there would be no so-called *gay marriages*. Any display of open homosexuality would justify beheading the unbeliever.

The problem inherent with God today using Islamic fundamentalists as His agents to root idolatry out of greater Christendom is that of nuclear weapons—

The “after problems” of any nuclear exchange could well destroy life on this planet, especially if the exchange expanded upon regional boundaries. Matthew’s Gospel has Jesus saying,

So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. For *then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.* Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand. (Matt 24:15–25 emphasis added)

President Obama has negotiated a treaty-like agreement with Iran that will ensure that Iran has nuclear weapons within the foreseeable future, and the President has apparently guaranteed Iran that the United States would defend Iran against any Israeli preemptive air strikes, a guarantee that we probably will never have to implement after Russia sells Iran state-of-the-art surface-to-air missile shields for its nuclear facilities—and the potential for global nuclear war of the sort that would destroy all living creatures will become President Obama’s second term legacy ... President Obama truly seems to be a man commissioned to destroy the idolatry of greater Christendom as well as of liberal humanism, this destruction coming at a very high price to living creatures of all sorts.

The *Beloved*, the *Firstborn Son* of God, existed as the <Beloved> (used as a naming noun not as an adjective) before He became the Firstborn Son when the breath/spirit/glory [all words for the same usually invisible life-giving energy force] of God, in the visible (to John the Baptist) bodily form of a dove, descended upon the man Jesus and entered into Him, thereby “penetrating” His spirit in a similar manner to how the spirit of the glorified Christ enters into and penetrates the spirit of the person [*to*

pneuma tou 'anthropou] called to be a disciple as a husband penetrates his wife for purposes of procreation ...

The preceding sentence is perhaps necessarily convoluted; for when Paul wrote, “I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God” (1 Cor 11:3), Paul used the relationship between a married man and his wife and of the man entering his wife for the purpose of procreation as a type or analogy of spiritual birth.

Regardless of what name is given to a civil union between persons of the same gender, marriage can only occur between a man and a woman, with the “head” of the male penis penetrating the vagina of the woman as the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] entered into [*eis* — from Mark 1:10] the man Jesus and into His spirit, thereby bringing to spiritual “birth” the man Jesus. It was at this moment when the man Jesus became the Firstborn Son of God the Father. Previously, He was the *Only Begotten* or the unique Son of Himself; for upon entering into His creation (John 1:3) as His *Only Begotten* (John 3:16), He entered as a human person, not as a deity. He no longer had indwelling heavenly life (that is, life outside of space-time). He was without indwelling heavenly life from His conception in Mary’s womb until the spirit of God entered into Him when He was raised from a watery grave [baptism in the Jordan] by John the Baptist. And when Jesus emerged from the Jordan on the west side and entered the Promised Land as a person truly born of spirit or born again, the man Jesus did in type—at a spiritually elevated level—what Joshua [in Greek, *'Iesou* or *Jesus*] did when he led the children of Israel into the Promised Land, the representation of the Sabbath.

Returning to pick up a concept temporarily left behind: the *Beloved* had His glory or spirit before He created all that was made physically. The Father also had His glory [*pneuma Theou*] before His *Beloved* created all that was made. And as far as can be affirmatively determined from Scripture, in the *Kingdom* of God, only these two “glories” or spirits existed when the *Beloved* created the Cosmos.

The *Beloved* gave up His glory when He entered His creation as His unique Son, the man Jesus. At this time, only one “glory” remained in the *Kingdom* of God, this glory being that of the Father. And it was this glory or spirit that descended upon the man Jesus when John raised Him from the waters of the Jordan. It was at that moment when the *Only Begotten* became the *Begotten* [fathered by the Ancient of Days] of God. The *Beloved* wasn’t previously begotten by the Father, but existed as a co-precept, with Paul writing,

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in *Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.* And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2:5–7 emphasis added)

The concept of God the Father existing with His Beloved as co-precepts can be understood by grasping the relationship between Emperor Augustus and Emperor Tiberius in 13 CE ... in 12 CE, Tiberius was declared co-precept by Augustus, who didn't want any interregnum to follow his death. Thus for part of the year of 12 CE, for all of the year of 13 CE and for part of the year of 14 CE, Rome had co-equal emperors that were not really co-equals. Augustus was still the emperor, but Tiberius had taken over his duties as Augustus' age showed. Then in 14 CE, Augustus died and Tiberius became the sole emperor. Most histories of the Roman Empire will have Tiberius beginning his reign in 14 CE, but these histories are only partially true. Tiberius' reign began in 12 CE as co-precept with Augustus.

In the *Kingdom* of God, the Father and His Beloved were co-equals [*equality with God*], but they were not the same triune entity. Two glories or spirits—both holy spirits—existed, with these two spirits (once glory was returned to the resurrected man Jesus) seen in Romans 8, verses 9 and 11:

You, however, are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if in fact the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness. If the spirit of Him [*pneuma Theou*] who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He [God the Father] who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His spirit [that dwells in you. (Rom 8:9–11)]

As the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] entered into the man Jesus, thereby giving indwelling heavenly life to the man Jesus while He remained a physically living human person, the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] entered into ten of His first disciples when the glorified Jesus “breathed” on them:

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when He had said this, **He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit** [*pneuma 'agion*]. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld." (John 20:19–23 emphasis added)

To recap the preceding: before the *Beloved* entered His creation as His unique Son, two glories or spirits existed in the *Kingdom* of God as revealed in the deconstruction of the linguistic determinative <YHWH>, where the letter <H> represents aspiration or “breath” as in the Greek icon <*pneuma*>. But with the spiritual death of the *Beloved* when He entered His creation as His unique Son—the son of any person is NOT the person—only one holy spirit continued to exist in the *Kingdom* of God, the spirit of the One who twice raised the man Jesus from death, once when this spirit gave life to Jesus' inner self, His spirit, and then a second time when the Father bodily raised Jesus from death. Therefore, for a human son of God to be truly born of spirit, this human son of

God will have the indwelling of the spirit of Christ in the person's spirit, and in the spirit of Christ will be the spirit or glory of God the Father.

Jesus—in the reality of what Joshua [in Greek, *Y'esou*, or *Jesus*] did as shadow and copy of the *Only Begotten*—will lead the children of a second Israel into heaven, with greater Christendom forming this second Israel and being the “Israel” that will be liberated from indwelling sin and death at the Second Passover, and with the children of this second Israel being the third part of humanity (Zech 13:9) that comes to God, Father and Son, in the Endurance of Jesus, the last 1260 days of the seven endtime years of tribulation ... again, for pedagogical reasons, the outwardly circumcised nation of Israel in Egypt forms the shadow and type of greater Christendom today, with the Hebrew taskmasters that Pharaoh placed over their brothers (Ex 1:11) being analogous to the Christian ministries that exercise the authority of the Adversary over the Christian laity, regardless of denomination.

The more Pharaoh oppressed the Hebrews in Egypt, the more the Hebrews multiplied (Ex 1:12) — and so it is today, and so it has been since the Reformation: the more Christians are oppressed, the greater the number of people identifying themselves as Christians ... the Adversary remains the prince of this world, the prince of the power of the air. All authority in this world, regardless of the origin of the authority, presently comes through the Adversary, meaning that the authority by which President Obama rules comes through the Adversary. The authority exercised by elected Senators and elected Congressmen and Congresswomen comes through the Adversary. The authority of corporate CEOs comes through the Adversary. The authority of an ordained clergy comes through the Adversary, and yes, this means that the Pope exercises his authority at the discretion of the Adversary.

The watchers told King Nebuchadnezzar that the Most High sets the basest of men over the kingdom of men (Dan 4:17), meaning that of Americans, President Obama qualifies as the basest of men. This might well mean that a future President Trump would be the basest of men whereas a future President Carson would likely mean that God has begun to recover His people by placing a more righteous man—a humble man—over American Christendom.

Of the many American presidential candidates vying for their party's nomination, only a few are not active agents of the Adversary—and these few are unknowingly striving to become active agents. However, the next presidential election in the United States will indicate whether America, the bellwether for greater Christianity, can get farther from God: when humanity can get no farther from God, the spiritual midnight hour will be at hand. The Second Passover liberation of a second Israel will occur on the second Passover if humanity can get no farther from the Light. If humanity can get farther from God, then the societies of this world will continue in their evil ways for another seven years. But consider where the world would most likely be by late spring 2024, the technology for editing human DNA becoming common with Islamic fundamentalists resisting this technology and having become servants of God as Nebuchadnezzar was a servant of the Lord (Jer 25:9) against Jerusalem and the House of Judah.

Can America bomb Islamic fundamentalists back into the 7th-Century, where these fundamentalists want to take the world? Can Islamic fundamentalists go so “dark” that

interception of electronic signals do not pick up their *chatter*? Will the world divide itself into Orwellian spheres of influence that continually war with each other? Will *Big Brother* place spying eyes in every American's bedroom; in every American's kitchen to see if the American is eating healthy food choices and exercising regularly? Will America descend into civil war over the human rights of unborn children?

The questions are many for what can be known about the future is that humanity will continue to move away from God until collectively, humanity can get no farther from God. And this is not a vision for short-term hope and prosperity, but the reality of what it means to have the Adversary continue as the prince of this world.

John's Gospel identifies the *Beloved* as the Logos [*'o Logos*] who created all things physical, then entered His creation (John 1:3) as His unique Son (John 3:16), the man Jesus of Nazareth who when His ministry began was baptized by John. When raised from the watery grave of baptism, this man Jesus was born again or born from above when He received the glory of God in the form of the breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] when this Holy Spirit [*pneuma 'agion*] descended upon and entered into [*eis*] Him (Mark 1:10) in the bodily form of a dove—

In Greek, <*pneuma*> as a noun references moving air as in a person taking a deep breath. This noun *pneuma* translates into Latin as <*spīritus*>, which then enters English as <spirit>. The noun *spīritus* in Latin is used to represent *the breath of a person or of a god*, Therefore the most appropriated translation of <*pneuma 'agion*> into English would be <holy breath> rather than the hybridized noun phrase <Holy Spirit>; for the breath or glory of God never has had personhood any more than your breath has personhood.

All Christians that seek to enter into God's presence on the day after the Sabbath continue in the *Guilt of Samaria*, Jeroboam's means of preventing the ten tribes from returning to Jerusalem and the temple. All Christians who worship on Sunday [the day of the sun] are as the ten tribes of Samaria were. And as Assyria took the northern kingdom of Israel into captivity, relocating these tribes beyond the Black Sea and bringing in aliens to occupy the land that had been part of Israel's inheritance, God will bring an ideology against greater Christendom—this ideology not necessarily being Islam but more likely being “humanism”—to punish and destroy a people that profess to be of God but a people as far from God as Jeroboam and his tribes were.

We must return to the most fundamental question: can Christian dissent be tolerated in a fellowship ... dissent within a fellowship serves a purpose if dissent is permitted; for there is no basis to determine genuine from false disciples when every person within a fellowship believes that same thing as every other person. The fellowship is then genuine or false; for without dissent, the fellowship is collectively of one mind, usually the mind of the pastor or of the Pastor General or of the Prophet or Pope. In these fellowships, there is no means of testing doctrine, of testing spirits, or of truly growing in grace and knowledge ... fellowships without internal dissent will inevitably teach fossilized doctrines, as has occurred within the Sabbatarian Churches of God (COGs) where Herbert W. Armstrong is held to be *God's essential endtime man*.

Armstrong, however, came out of a theologically “democratic” tradition, that of the Church of God, Seventh Day (COG7), with this democratic tradition permitting him to develop a following for himself by allowing him to teach or preach doctrines not then

held by COG7 ... once Armstrong separated from COG7, he did not permit dissent within fellowships of his followers, thereby assuring that there would be no “rebellion” within his ranks for nearly forty years (ca 1934–1974), a period of relatively rapid growth in his ministry.

Can any organization survive dissent manifested as in separation, disciples dividing themselves from other disciples and aligning themselves with one teacher or another teacher?

But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not being merely human? What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building. (1 Cor 3:1–9)

The organization that Armstrong began perished within a decade of his death while the Church of God, Seventh Day, continues on, still not fully embracing keeping the annual Sabbaths of God; still relying upon rabbinical Judaism for determination of when to observe the Christian Passover.

Although Armstrong and his ministers did not, Protestant theologians usually recognize the validity of the first four ecumenical councils, the first being the Council of Nicea (ca 325 CE) and the fourth being the Council of Chalcedon (ca 451 CE), with Protestants—especially Baptists—holding that after the judgments and definitions [the *Chalcedonian Definition*] of Chalcedon, Christians could read the Bible for themselves to determine right or wrong doctrines; that councils of bishops imposed theological error upon Believers who were to be taught by God under the New Covenant.

The ecumenical councils between the middle of the 5th-Century CE and early 16th-Century were held by Protestant Reformers of the Old Church to be without authority. However, the more honest position early in the 16th-Century was that of the Radical Reformers, who held that since every person was to be taught by God, none of the ecumenical councils—including the 4th-Century Council of Nicea exactly twelve centuries earlier—had validity when it came to establishing sound doctrine.

The Radical Reformers, in whose tradition *The Philadelphia Church* continues, understood that the entire corpus of the Old Church [the Roman Catholic Church] needed to be reformed and the Christian Church needed to return to the faith of the first Apostles in the 1st-Century ... these Radical Reformers were hunted down and killed, all of them dying while still young, too young to connect the theological loose ends they left flapping in the political winds blowing across German high lands.

The prophet Jeremiah records that Lord saying,

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the

covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband ... for this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days ... I will put my Law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jer 31:31–34)

Isaiah records,

Sing, O barren one, who did not bear; ...

All your children shall be taught by [YHWH],

And great shall be the peace of your children. (Isa 54:1, 13)

And the Apostle Paul or someone one in his entourage cites Jeremiah to Hebrew converts:

For He finds fault with them [Israel] when He says: "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. 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. And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.* For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." (Heb 8:8–12 emphasis added)

With God, nothing is established except by the testimony of two or three witnesses, with Isaiah and Jeremiah being two and with Paul's citation of Jeremiah seemingly making for three witnesses. Therefore, what value to God is an ecumenical council of approximately 300 bishops [when there were at the time nearly 1,800] to settle questions of "right doctrine" — *orthodoxy* — as occurred at the Council of Nicea, or as occurred with an ecumenical council of 370 bishops at Chalcedon? It will not be bishops that teach *right doctrine* to the Christian laity. God has no intention of leaving the teaching of *right doctrine* to the lawless, or the teaching of love for neighbor and brother to the *legalist*. With Christ Jesus being every Christian's older brother, the teaching of human sons of God will be done by God.

To sincerely believe that God needs any person's help in teaching "truth" to the person He has drawn from this world is manifested presumptuousness.

Did the God of Abraham need help from other men in teaching His prophets of old ... Israel presumed that Israel was God's chosen people while ignoring the caveat:

On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. They set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, and they encamped

in the wilderness. There Israel encamped before the mountain, while Moses went up to God. [YHWH] called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, **if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples**, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel." (Ex 19:1–6 emphasis added)

There is nothing unconditional about Israel being the God of Abraham's treasured possession ... being a kingdom of priests and a holy nation was *conditioned* on *obeying* the voice of the Lord (which required hearing the words of the Lord) and *keeping* His covenant. No obedience, no being a treasured possession; no being a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

The covenant made on the day when the Lord took the fathers of Israel by the hand to lead this nation and this people out from Egypt—the Passover covenant (see Ex 12:43–51)—was conditioned upon the people of Israel keeping the Passover as Moses commanded. If Israel neglected the Passover, the people were neglected by the Lord turning His back to the people.

But what, now, are endtime disciples to do with,

And the king 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)

The people of Israel didn't exactly neglect keeping the Passover: they simply wrongly kept the Passover for centuries (most or all of four centuries). So question: how far away from sound doctrine can Israel come and still not be rejected by the Lord? And in Matthew's Gospel, we get a glimpse.

Do not think that I [Matthew's Jesus] have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. *Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven*, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matt 5:17–20)

The parameters for sound doctrine are found inside boundary markers, with the outer boundary representing death being the righteousness of scribes and Pharisees and the inner boundary representing life being *keeping the Commandments and teaching others to do likewise* even when all will be taught by God. Thus, it would seem that being called least in the kingdom of the heavens is as far from God as a person can get

and still be saved [glorified], and to be called *least* comes from relaxing, not breaking, the least of the Commandments, with the Sabbath Commandment being about the holiness of time, an aspect of the creation and thus a thing created. Time and its passage can be written as mathematical functions of gravity. The inner self of a human person is not physical and as such is not of this creation. God is not of His creation. Therefore, Commandments pertaining to God and to the inner selves of human persons are of a qualitative higher hierarchal order than is a Commandment making holy created space in the space-time creation. And this will now have the Sabbath Commandment being the least of the Commandments and the one most likely to be broken by Christians not truly born of spirit and thus still sons of disobedience.

The first Covenant made at Sinai—this covenant is in addition to the Passover covenant, and this covenant made in the third month—was conditioned upon Israel hearing and obeying the voice of the Lord. But this covenant, ratified by blood, lasted only forty days, no more. Yes, it was to be an everlasting covenant; and indeed, it lasted for as long as the people's obedience lasted. But a covenant goes from one shedding of blood to the next shedding of blood. Compare:

Moses came and told the people all the words of [YHWH] and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do." And Moses wrote down all the words of [YHWH]. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to [YHWH]. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words." (Ex 24:3–8)

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And when Moses saw that the people had broken loose (for Aaron had let them break loose, to the derision of their enemies), then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Who is on the Lord's side? Come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. And he said to them, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'Put your sword on your side each of you, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill his brother and his companion and his neighbor.'" And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day about three thousand men of the people fell. And Moses said, "Today you have been ordained for the service of the Lord, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, so that he might bestow a blessing upon you this day." The next day Moses said to the people, "You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." So Moses returned to

[YHWH] and said, "Alas, this people has sinned a great sin. They have made for themselves gods of gold. But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written." But [YHWH] said to 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." Then [YHWH] sent a plague on the people, because they made the calf, the one that Aaron made. (Ex 32:25–35)

Who is the Christian that will argue for the first Sinai Covenant remaining in effect following Moses casting to the ground and breaking the two stone tablets upon which the Lord had written the Ten Commandments by His own finger? "And as soon as he [Moses] came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain" (Ex 32:19).

As a lump of dough, who is the Christian that is so "conditioned" by the leavening of the Sadducees and Pharisees the Christian willingly believes the first Sinai covenant is the Old Covenant that remained until the ministry of John the Baptist? "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force; for all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John" (Matt 11:12–13).

The first Sinai Covenant lasted forty days, and this first Sinai Covenant forms the shadow and copy of the Second Sinai Covenant, a spiritual [or everlasting] covenant that remains in effect to this day; for this Second Sinai Covenant was ratified by Moses entering into the presence of the Lord, as represented by Moses' shining face. But neither the First nor the Second Sinai Covenant represents the New Covenant under which sins [transgressions of the covenant] are remembered no more ... this New Covenant forms the reality of the Passover Covenant, made with Israel on the day when the Lord took the fathers of Israel by the hand to lead Israel out of Egypt, the geographical representation of sin (*cf.* Ex 12:42–51; Jer 31:31–34; Heb 8:8–12).

If sin is no longer remembered, then *Israel* as a nation circumcised of heart has escaped from Sin as Israel under Moses escaped from Egypt.

But as Israel under Moses continually wanted to return to Egypt, greater Christendom, once liberated from indwelling Sin and Death, will want to return to *sin* via transgression of the Commandments, notably the Sabbath Commandment.

No fellowship can long keep the Sabbath and the-day-after-the-Sabbath as holy time. Inevitably, for as long as the prince of this world remains the Adversary, the Sabbath will be neglected. And once filled with the spirit of God, neglect of the Sabbath will be a death sentence; will be blasphemy against the spirit of God that liberated the Christian from indwelling Sin and Death.

The Moab Covenant, mediated by Moses and made with the *children of Israel* on the plains of Moab, forms the shadow and type of the New Covenant. And under the Moab

Covenant, the Commandments are repeated. Only the Commandments are kept for differing reasons from why they were to be kept under the First Sinai Covenant.

The Trinitarian-Arian controversy, seemingly settled for Trinitarians by the first four ecumenical councils (of which the Council of Chalcedon, held October 8th to November 1st, 451 CE, was the fourth) continues to this day; for Arian Christendom, deification of the breath of God remains a heresy ... there are two principle reasons for marking and shunning someone who calls him or herself a brother-in-Christ, the first reason being that the “Christian” for doctrinal reasons causes or attempts to cause divisions within a fellowship, with what Paul wrote about divisions being true:

In the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. (1 Cor 11:17–19)

Divisions, apparently, are a necessary attribute of church fellowships so as to establish who is genuine and who is false. But if necessary for the in-house separation of sheep from goats, the problem enters into the Church of what is true worship of Christ and what is false doctrine—and how much false doctrine is permitted before those espousing falseness must be publically addressed through marking and expelling, with Matthew’s Jesus saying,

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. (Matt 18:15–19)

Although the preceding citation has been widely used to mark and expel individuals holding beliefs other than those deemed “orthodox,” the citation is, itself, falsely used to *disfellowship* or *excommunicate* a believer. For how has a brother wronged you via a false teaching or a false belief that the brother holds? Have you been wronged if the person who baptized you holds a false belief, such as Eusebius of Nicomedia—not to be confused with his contemporary Eusebius of Caesarea, well-known church historian—who baptized Emperor Constantine I at Constantine’s villa in Nicomedia 22 May 337 CE, shortly before Constantine’s death?

Again, the orthodoxy of the Roman Church denies legitimacy to Arian theology; yet the Roman Church considers Emperor Constantine’s baptism not only valid, but that of a saint. So do the beliefs of the person baptizing another—or you—really matter? John the

Baptist was not born of spirit when he baptized Jesus the Nazarene. For what is the criteria for salvation as Matthew's Jesus gave this criteria: feed the hungry, give shelter to the homeless, clothe the naked.

In the example of Eusebius of Nicomedia is seen both the reason to mark and shun a person for ideological or theological reasons, and the reason to not shun, thereby using the person who is false as a line drawn in sand to determine who is genuine. And in Arian Christianity is also seen what happens when an ideology is pushed to the margins and into darkness and not explored in the light of day; for Rome and the Roman Church was thrice sacked in the so-called Dark Age, all three times by Arian Christians.

Today, a neo-Arian ideology is the fastest growing form of Christianity: the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the principal branch of *Restorationist Christianity*.

Where do we go from here? There is no good answer; for the vast majority of Christians who believe they have been born of spirit haven't been so born. The vast majority of Sabbatharian Christians who believe they do what is pleasing in God's sight are without love for neighbor and brother. So what can be done: shall we employ wisdom as a parachute, and jump into a cauldron of theological turmoil? Can we not jump?

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