

Commentary — From the Margins *Understanding the Things of God*

1.

Under the best of circumstances, absolute proof of anything is elusive, a mirage that often isn't what it seems when finally captured, measured and weighed, a declaration I have used before but nevertheless a valid statement when it comes to overturning of long-established traditions and traditional beliefs. Close reading of a text will clear away sloppy reading of previous generations, but the close reading of a sacred text will raise more doubts than such a reading initially dispels. In Volume Four of *APA*, I argued that while Matthew's Gospel isn't the biography of the historical Jesus, that while Matthew's Gospel cannot be historically true, that while Matthew's Gospel can only be prophetically true, Matthew's Gospel remains central to understanding the essence of Christianity; that Matthew's Gospel differs significantly from the Book of Acts which is, perhaps, the only Sophist novel most modern Christians have read. The so-called great commission of Matthew chapter 28 is time-linked to when "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given" to Christ Jesus (Matt 28:18), and *all authority* will not be given to Christ Jesus until the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation; i.e., on doubled day 1260 of the 2520 day long tribulation. Thus, the post-resurrection scenario found in Matthew's Gospel remains futuristic, even prophetic for the Body of Christ that is individually and collectively the Christian Church (1 Cor 12:27). And if Matthew's post-resurrection scenario remains futuristic, then all of Matthew's Gospel, including its genealogy of Jesus, pertains to the disciple between when the disciple is initially drawn from this world by the Father (John 6:44) and when the disciple is truly born of spirit through the glory of God entering into the person after Jesus died for the disciple while the disciple remained a sinner (Rom 5:8).

Matthew's Gospel is in a genre unlike any other: it is somehow true, non-fiction, but true for the inner self, not the outer self of a person, for which the Gospel is fictional: the physicality of this world works against Christians comprehending the things of Christ, which includes Matthew's Gospel as well as John's Gospel. The literalness with which Christians strive to read the New Testament prevents them from ever grasping the things of God.

As a point of genre, Matthew's Gospel is a sermon, perhaps the most important sermon that has ever been delivered. It is unlike the typical mealy-mouthed sermons delivered in traditional Christian fellowships; it is not a hell & brimstone sermon like Jonathon Edwards' *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*. But it is nevertheless a sermon that is structured for oral delivery, and useful for instruction of endtime disciples who must walk in this world as Christ

Jesus walked if they are to live spiritually. And because of the importance of this sermon, it is appropriately canonized in New Testament Writ, and it should not be judged by the standard of historical veracity.

The Apostle Paul wrote to spiritual infants in Corinth and all of Achaia (*cf.* 1 Cor 1:2; 3:1–2), and he wrote the following to these infants in Christ:

And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of spirit [*pneumatos*] and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"—these things God has revealed to us through the spirit of Him [*tou pneumatos autou*]. For the spirit [*to pneuma*] searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit [*pneuma*] of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the things of God except the spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit from [the] God [*tou Theou*], that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by [*holy*] spirit [*pneumatos 'agion*], interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. (1 Cor 2:3–13)

Historically, when Paul came to Corinth, the Greek and Latin world was undergoing a resurgence of “learning”: the *Second Sophistic*, with the Emperor supporting this returned emphasis on philosophy, rhetoric, and oratory that Paul addresses when he writes, “my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom” and “among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age.”

At Corinth and throughout Achaia, the Apostle Paul encountered many Greek *Lovers of God*, many who were noble *Theophile*, and Paul didn't approve of what they had been taught, but fought against the “Christ” they received, declaring, “I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough” (2 Cor 11:3–4).

Eve was innocent in her belief of her husband when the serpent approached her in the Garden of God. Even though she had the physical body of an adult, she had the mind and maturity of a new born ... the holy ones at Corinth and throughout all Achaia were spiritual infants when Paul was among them; yet a newly born son of God should be able to comprehend the referents in play in what Paul wrote about the spirit [*pneuma*] in a person. A human person understands those things that pertain to a person or to human personhood, as opposed to those things a person shares with other mammals through the spirit

[*pneuma*] of personhood that is found in the inner self or soul [*psuche*] of the human person. By extension, unless a person receives the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the indwelling spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*], the person cannot understand the things of God, But the holy ones have received comprehension of the things of God through words not taught, not delivered via human intellect but taught through receipt of the holy spirit.

The preceding is, in the structure of an Aristotelian argument, of primary importance: the holy spirit received through the indwelling of Christ teaches the things of God to the foreknown and predestined disciple. These things could otherwise not be known to the person, and according to John's Gospel, are not known to the disciple except via example until Jesus dies for the person while the person remains a sinner and is thereafter raised to life in the person and the person receives the *Parakletos*, the spirit of truth, sent by the Father to the person.

Elsewhere Paul wrote,

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to spirit [*pneuma*] set their minds on the things of the spirit [*tou pneumatou*]. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the spirit [*tou pneumatou*] is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in spirit [*pneumati*], if in fact spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] dwells in you. Anyone who does not have spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] does not belong to Him. (Rom 8:5–9)

All human persons breathe the same breath of life that was delivered to the first Adam when *Elohim* [singular in usage] breathed life into the nostrils of this man of mud (Gen 2:7). Human persons receive physical "life" from no source other than the one time delivery of breath to the first Adam ... Adam's breath was in Eve; hence the woman was flesh of Adam's flesh and bone of Adam's bone. And from a common female parent, all of humanity has come as mitochondrial DNA reveals. So, again, all of humanity breathes the same breath of life as Adam breathed.

Likewise, all human sons of God receive the same breath or spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] that the last Adam received when the spirit of God entered the baptized man Jesus in the bodily form of a dove (Mark 1:10). Therefore, the human person (as if molded clay) who has not been made spiritually alive through receipt of the breath or spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] is spiritually as the first Adam was physically prior to when *Elohim* breathed into his nostrils. This human person is spiritually dead—and the dead know nothing (Eccl 9:5). Clay in a clay deposit does not know the things of a man; nor does a human person in common humanity know the things of God. For want of the spirit [*pneuma*] that is in man, even molded clay on a potter's wheel does not know the things that give to a human person *personhood*.

When the Apostle Paul initially wrote to the Thessalonians, he concluded his epistle by warning,

Do not quench the spirit [put out the bright fire that is the glory of God – from Ezek 1:26–28]. Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit [*pneuma*] and soul [*psuche*] and body [*soma*] be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess 5:19–23)

The Apostle Paul separated the *pneuma* that permits a human person to know the things of a person from the *psuche* of the person that forms the inner self of the person and actually animates the fleshly body, with both the *pneuma* and *psuche* of the person being intangible [non physical] aspects of personhood that cannot be weighed and measured. While modern scientists better understand the brain as a chemical computer, and while great strides have been made in mapping human DNA and understanding epigenetics, the very nature of scientific inquiry requires work to be done on what is physical and thus, what is of this creation ... the spirit of Christ entering into the spirit in man, thereby giving heavenly life to the inner self [soul or *psuche*] of the foreknown and predestined son of God, is “life” that comes from outside of the creation entering into the person, and as such is not a subject that permits scientific inquiry. And it was the *pneuma* of ancient King Nebuchadnezzar that was taken from him for seven years: for these seven years, the king did not know the things of a man but had the “nature” or thoughts of an ox, a beast (Dan chap 4).

It will be the *pneuma* of the first demonic king or beast of the federated kings that appear after the great king of Greece is broken that is taken from this first beast when the mind of a man is given to this demon: “The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and ***the mind of a man was given to it***” (Dan 7:4 double emphasis added).

Understanding Scripture—having the mind of God—will have the Christian disciple taking meaning from Holy Writ via typological exegesis, in which the visible physical things of this world reveal and precede the invisible spiritual things of God, with this dual-referent system imbedded in Hebraic poetics constructed in thought-couplets that feature the first presentation of an idea physically, collectively, of darkness, then the second presentation of the idea spiritually, individually (or within the individual), and of light. Thus, the movement of thought throughout Scripture is from physical to spiritual—

The movement from physical (of this creation) to spiritual (of God) is “constructed” into the Sabbath commandment as initially given at Mount Sinai then repeated on the plains of Moab when the mediator of the Second Covenant was still Moses:

For in six days [*YHWH*] made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore [*YHWH*] blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Ex 20:11)

You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and [*YHWH*] your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore [*YHWH*] your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day. (Deut 5:15)

Initially, the reason given for keeping the Sabbath was remembrance that the God of Abraham was the Creator of all that was made physically, with the Creation, itself, being a form of “dark liberation” from the nothingness of the Abyss in which rebelling angels were cast after iniquity was found in an anointed cherub. But forty years later as the children of Israel were about to enter into the Promised Land that physically represented the Sabbath, the reason given for keeping the Sabbath was remembrance that Israel was an enslaved nation in Egypt—

The Promised Land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, was a type of God’s rest that foreshadowed the spiritually circumcised nation of Israel entering into the millennial rest of the Lord, with both “rests” being types of entering into heaven. Thus, the reason for Sabbath observance going into the Millennium will be remembrance of Israel’s liberation from indwelling sin and death, with this liberation coming at the Second Passover when all of Christendom will be filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] ... all of humanity will be liberated from indwelling sin and death halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation when the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man, who will “baptize” the world in spirit and into life as the world was baptized in water and into death in the days of Noah.

The glorified Christ Jesus doesn’t receive all authority in heaven and on earth (from Matt 28:18) until the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation. To argue otherwise is to argue that the glorified Christ is responsible for the moral and theological mess in which the world is presently embroiled—and He is NOT! The Adversary is solely responsible for the deceitful mindsets of this world. The Adversary is responsible for the evil that exists in this world. And while human persons are not innocents but bear responsibility for not rebelling against the Adversary and doing what is right when the opportunity arises, human persons are truly pawns being manipulated by those able to till the mental topography of living entities.

The movement of the reason for Sabbath observance under Moses from remembrance of the Creation to remembrance of Israel’s liberation from physical slavery in Egypt, together, form a geographically and chronologically separated set of mirror images, easily seen in the linguistic structure of the two cited passages (Ex 20:11; Deut 5:15) and the length of time after and before the Passover when each covenant is given.

Sabbath observance is, in itself, a thing by which or through which a man can understand and comprehend the things of a man, especially when the Sabbath forms a memorial to the Creation:

And [*YHWH*] said to Moses, "You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, 'Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, [*YHWH*], sanctify you. You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you. Everyone who profanes it shall be put to death. Whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days shall work

be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to [YHWH]. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death. Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations, as a covenant forever. It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days [YHWH] made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed." (Ex 31:12–17)

To understand in advance that for Christians, Sabbath observance serves as a memorial of the liberation of circumcised-of-heart Israel from indwelling sin and death at the Second Passover is to understand a thing of God; for Christ Jesus replaced Moses as the mediator of the Moab Covenant, the covenant made in addition to the covenant made at Mount Sinai/Horeb (Deut 29:1), with this covenant made at Mount Sinai not being the First Sinai Covenant that Israel broke forty days after it was given, but the Second Sinai Covenant (Ex chap 34) that was ratified by Moses entering into the presence of the Lord so that Moses' face shown with glory henceforth.

The First Sinai Covenant (Ex chaps 20–24) ended when Moses cast down the stone tablets and “broke” the covenant through symbolically stoning all of rebelling Israel; for a truly eternal covenant has no qualifiers and as such is not ratified by the shedding of blood (*cf.* Heb 9:22–23; Ex 19:3–8; 24:1–8), but by better promises:

The everlasting covenant made with Noah was ratified by rainbows (Gen 9:9–16);

The everlasting covenant made at Mount Sinai with Moses and with Israel was ratified by the glory that shown from Moses' face (Ex 34:10–35);

The everlasting covenant made on the plains of Moab with the children of Israel, then present and yet to be born, was ratified by a song (Deut 31:19–30).

Covenants ratified by the shedding of blood such as the circumcision covenant made with Abraham are of the flesh and remained in effect for as long as natural Israel was the firstborn son of the God of Abraham (see Ex 4:22). But a covenant is broken by death. The God of Abraham—the God of living ones (Matt 22:31–32)—entered His creation as His unique son, the man Jesus the Nazarene (*cf.* in Greek, John 1:1–14; 3:16), and in doing so, He divested Himself of equality with God (Phil 2:5–8), that is the God of dead ones that Israel never knew for Israel was spiritually dead (Matt 8:22) and knew nothing, understood nothing about the things of God; for Israel never had the spirit of God ... when King David asked not to have the holy spirit taken from him (Ps 51:11), David had the spirit of *Yah*, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God of living ones not dead ones.

The prophets of the Lord had the spirit of *Yah*, the holy spirit of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not the spirit of the God of dead ones that raised the crucified Jesus from death (see Rom 8:11).

But David as a poet, in making a thought-couplet distinction between *Yah* and *YHWH* in Psalms 146:1, 148:1, and 149:1, with *Yah* occupying the physical position in the thought-couplet and with *YHWH* [which includes *Yah*] occupying

the spiritual position, disclosed that David as a man after the heart of the Lord, understood spiritual matters from a physical perspective. As such, David had more “spiritual” understanding than so-called Christian leaders at the end of this present age; yet, the disciple who will be least in the kingdom of the heavens will have far greater understanding of the things of God than David had. These things simply cannot be known by human persons not truly born of God—and every person born of God will walk in this world as the man Jesus walked in this world; for with the indwelling of Christ, the disciple can walk no other way.

Understanding what I write is contingent upon the person truly being born of God. Without being born of spirit [*pneuma*] through receipt of a second breath of life, the breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the breath of Christ [*pneuma Christou*], the human auditor can reflect upon the novelty of what I write, can casually dismiss what I write, can even accept the validity of portions of what I write, but the reader will not feel compelled to “receive” me (from Matt 10:40–41) to the extent of supporting the work I do—and this is the way it should be ... when I was called to reread prophecy in January 2002, I was not given any command to make disciples; I was not called to be an evangelist, but to assign godly meaning to biblical prophecies already given, prophecies that were sealed and kept secret until the time of the end. I was to deliver *meaning* to words uttered long ago; for a word consists of a linguistic icon or signifier that is uttered or inscribed. A linguistic object or signified must be given to this linguistic icon, but this object isn’t given to the word by the one who utters or inscribes the word, but by the one who hears or reads the word. Not just any object can logically be given to the linguistic icon, but an object that *makes sense* within the realm of *Thirdness* in which the icon and object exists. Thus the English icon <cow> cannot be assigned a mouse-size object, nor an inanimate object, but a large bovine-like linguistic object that lacks a graceful gait.

In fully alphabetized languages such as Indo-European languages, the uttered or inscribed word as a linguistic icon metaphorically represents the linguistic object: the icon is not the object, but serves to bring the object to mind, with the image in the mind creating the reality that reduces things to thoughts, mentally storable in the memory of the person. It is by this means that a person knows the things of a person, with all of the preceding being understandable by the spiritually dead.

Now, move all of the preceding figuratively up a level: to know the things of God—higher than the things of a man—requires realizing that words metaphorically representing the things of this world can never truly represent the things of God but can only give a darkened look at heavenly things. A Gospel that is of God (my contention is that Matthew’s Gospel is such a text) will not necessarily be literally true; for to be literally true, the text cannot be of God but will be of this world, an ironic juxtaposition that the Adversary attempted to duplicate through Christian acceptance of the Book of Acts. Hence, an eternal covenant mediated by Moses can only serve as a shadow and type of a spiritual covenant mediated by Christ Jesus, which in turn forms a shadow and copy of a thought pattern in the mind of Christ. No covenant will be made between God

and His sons. None will need to be made; for His sons won't be "His sons" unless they share the mind and thoughts of God. So the concept of covenants is of this world, and not of heaven, even when the covenants are eternal or everlasting (extending from age to age as a *covenant* is the distance between *cuttings* that shed blood).

Disciples who imagine themselves mature in the Christian faith and therefore able to teach others inevitably are in need of additional instruction even when they would seem to have grasped the basics of walking in this world as Jesus walked. The desire to teach is of this world and not of God, who gives His mind to those who are His; thus, the disciple who imagines him or herself a teacher—someone who instructs others in the ways of God—still does not know God, but is at best an infant in Christ regardless of how mature the person thinks he or she is.

Sin hampers spiritual maturation: the person who holds onto a fault, whether from the weakness of the flesh or from an errant understanding of God, stymies this son of God's spiritual maturation. So the length of time in the faith is no indication of spiritual growth. Only understanding the things of God and manifestation of love for brothers in Christ are indicators of spiritual maturation; so the person with little or no understanding of the thoughts of God is spiritually infantile.

Returning to the concept of a godly text not being literally true: in the 2nd-Century Christian Church—after the Body of Christ was spiritually dead—several novelistic treatments of the adventures and misadventures of Paul, of early Christian heroes and heroines were composed by Greek converts. These adventure tales became instantly popular, but they were not preserved in the Christian canon; whereas Luke's Gospel and Acts were, a credit to the Sophist who wrote these fictionalized accounts. And again, Acts is unmistakably a Greek novel that employs the popular motifs of late 1st/2nd Century *Second Sophistic* literature, with the icon phrase <*Second Sophistic*> being the literary-historical name given to Greek orators/writers/novelists flourishing under the reign of Nero and until the mid 3rd-Century CE, with Laodicea and Smyrna being important *Second Sophistic* centers. Acts eluded detection as fiction while the Pastoral Epistles of 1st & 2nd Timothy and Titus have been recognized as problematic texts for many centuries; for the Pastoral Epistles were falsely attributed to the Apostle Paul when any competent analysis of subject matter, syntax and word usage discloses that these epistles were not written by the Apostle but by someone claiming to be Paul perhaps a half century after Paul had passed from the scene. But the Pastoral Epistles well supported the formation of a Christian clergy and the suppression of women; so they were retained for their usefulness, not their authenticity. And women were prevented from speaking, from challenging male dominance of the fledgling clergy.

If Matthew's Gospel isn't historically true—it cannot be true if Mark's Gospel is, or if John's Gospel is—and if Luke's Gospel, Acts, and the Pastoral Epistles are not genuine, then secular academic claims as well as Islamic, and Jewish criticism of received Christian texts have merit even though those who make the

claims and criticisms utterly lack spiritual understanding: they know the things of man because they have the spirit [*pneuma*] of man within their inner selves, with their inner selves forming maquettes of their collective inner and outer selves.

Again, it is this maquette that is born of spirit before judgments of firstfruits are revealed and perishable flesh puts on imperishability, and understanding that the intangible soul [*psuche*] that is outside of scientific inquiry is a maquette of the combined inner and outer self comes from comprehending at a child's level a *thing of God*; for where are endtime disciples made aware of there being a spirit [*pneuma*] in man that causes a person to know the things of a person? Does this knowledge not come from Paul's first letter to the holy ones in Corinth and all of Achaia? And does not Paul write:

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. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 3:3:1–11 emphasis added)

The foundation of Christendom is Christ Jesus, but this foundation was laid by the Apostle Paul, not by the first disciples who were chosen by God the Father and delivered to Christ Jesus for nurturing ***to form the model***—the shadow and type—***of Christ dying for endtime disciples while they were still sinners*** (Rom 5:8) ... Christ didn't die for endtime disciples before they were conceived and therefore before they were sinners, but dies in the timeless present while disciples are still sinners. Christ died for me while I was still a son of disobedience, humanly born consigned to disobedience. So it isn't that I reach across time to make the man Jesus' 1st-Century death the death of my own inner self, the one with which I was born, but that Christ reaches across time to live then die then live again within me while I live physically.

Physical 1st-Century Apostles were given to the man Jesus by the Father, with the man Jesus born of God when the spirit or breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] bodily entered into Jesus as a dove (Mark 1:10) and thus before Jesus gathered His disciples. These physical 1st-Century disciples were not given to Jesus because they were intelligentsia of the Jewish world but because they were common men who sought righteousness. They were not given because they were educated or literate and could read Scripture for themselves. Rather, they were the reality of those Paul described:

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And *because of Him you are in Christ Jesus*, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." (1 Cor 1:26–31 emphasis added)

So there is no misunderstanding: there is no need for anyone to teach spiritual livestock the fundamentals of Christian living, and those who are truly called by the Father and delivered to Christ Jesus while still sinners will learn from Christ as Jesus' first disciples learned, imitating Jesus, thereby walking in this world as Jesus walked. And in imitating Jesus, they will be taught by Moses; they will be taught the Law until they truly know the Law.

It was to those knowing the Law that Paul addressed the complexity of his treatise to saints at Rome: "Or do you not know, brothers—***for I am speaking to those who know the law***—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives" (Rom 7:1 double emphasis added).

Paul's intended audience for his treatise to the saints at Rome was "those who knew the Law"; hence, what Paul wrote about the righteousness that was of faith and about professing the Lord and being saved (Rom chap 10) pertained only to those who knew the Law and by extension, had turned to God when in a far land and had returned to keeping the Law.

But Paul went on to write,

For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing His riches on all who call on Him. For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So *faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ*. But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have, for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world." But I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry." Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me." But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people." (Rom 10:11–21 emphasis added)

So, for those who do not know the Law, regardless of ethnicity, there remains a place for preaching the good news of Christ Jesus, but preaching Christ through

Moses, or through keeping the Law so that all will know right from wrong, righteousness from evil—and this is what the author of Matthew’s Gospel does.

It isn’t that the author of Matthew’s Gospel strives for historical veracity, but uses historical veracity—as found in Mark’s Gospel—to produce a sermon unlike any other preserved inside or outside of the theological cannon; for in Matthew’s Gospel alone is found the Sermon on the Mount in which Matthew’s Jesus moves the Law from regulating the hands and body of an Israelite to regulating the desires of the heart and the thoughts of the mind (*e.g.*, Matt 5:21–22; 27–28). In Matthew’s Gospel, Matthew’s Jesus separates the God of the living (i.e., the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) from the God of dead ones that raises the dead from death (Matt 22:31–32). The Apostle Paul also separated deities, as did the author of John’s Gospel. Hence, the author of Matthew’s Gospel discloses a degree of theological sophistication beyond that of the author of Luke’s Gospel and of the Book of Acts. The author of Matthew’s Gospel “knows” the things of God whereas the Sophist who wrote Acts did not.

Whether the Sophist who wrote Luke’s Gospel and wrote Acts was one of the *super-apostles* with whom Paul contended will not be known for certain until Christ returns as the Messiah, but this Sophist had his *Paul* constantly striving with the *Circumcision Faction* that Paul mentions in his epistle to holy ones in Galatia. So, apparently, Paul was attacked from his left and from his right; was attacked by those who were lawless and who twisted his words [by their assignments of meaning to the linguistic icons Paul inscribed] to justify their lawlessness, as well as attacked by those who would have converts becoming outward Jews before becoming inward Jews. Neither faction[s] were of God; yet both have transcended history and today plague endtime saints.

Again, Jesus’ first disciples, especially the fishermen, form the shadow and copy of the inner selves of endtime disciples foreknown and predestined by God the Father.

Again, the physical visibly reveals and precedes the spiritual (*cf.* Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 15:46).

The Elect can see themselves through the mirror of the first disciples, who followed Jesus, walking as Jesus walked, but who were not born of spirit until after Jesus was crucified and spent three days and three nights in the Garden Tomb then breathed His breath on ten of His first disciples, saying, *Receive the holy spirit* (John 20:22).

John the Baptist’s disciples came to John and complained about Jesus’ concept of purification:

After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and He remained there with them and was baptizing. John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized (for John had not yet been put in prison). Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification. And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look he is baptizing, and all are going to him." John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. You yourselves

bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before Him.' The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears Him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:22–30)

Why were John's disciples upset about Jesus baptizing sinners? Apparently because Jesus taught that repentance alone was not sufficient for salvation—and for all firstfruits, repentance is not sufficient although the life lived in obedience to God will stand the person in good stead in the general resurrection euphemistically known as the great White Throne Judgment. But repentance of sin and the keeping of the Law are things of this world, something a human person in rebellion to the Adversary can do; for in giving to the children of Israel the Moab covenant, Moses in speaking of this covenant said,

For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?" Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?" But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it. (Deut 30:11–14)

Again, this Moab covenant is the Apostle Paul's "righteousness based on faith" (Rom 10:6) ... according to Paul, the person who has turned or returned to God when far from God and who by belief of God begins to do all that the Lord commanded the children of Israel to keep in the Book of Deuteronomy will see God circumcise the heart of the person (Deut 30:1–10) when the person professes with his or her mouth that Jesus is Lord and believes in the person's heart that God raised Jesus from death (Rom 10:9–10). For Paul, belief that Jesus is Lord would cause the person to walk in this world as Jesus walked; for a disciple in whom Jesus dwells cannot long walk contrary to how Jesus walked without killing the spirit, crucifying Jesus, a life-giving spirit (1 Cor 15:45). And Jesus will not be crucified a second time.

Baptism can occur many times for baptism by water is for repentance; but the glory of God [the breath of God that gives birth to the inner self] will only enter the person one time. When born of spirit, there are no second chances, no mulligan permitted. Thus, spiritual birth doesn't occur until Christ Jesus is certain that it is time for Him to die for the person and figuratively three days later, breathe on the person, thereby giving to the person the holy spirit [*pneuma 'agion*] that gives to the person's inner self indwelling eternal life.

The author of Matthew's Gospel took the historical veracity inherent in Mark's Gospel and used what he received to "tell" or craft a story about what internally happened to him through the indwelling of Christ Jesus, realizing that he would be with the glorified Christ when all authority in heaven and on earth was given to Christ—and how do I "know" this? Because I, too, have a similar story to tell, not that I expected to ever tell what happened now more than forty years ago. Not a story of borrowed historical veracity, but a story of calling and conversion followed by a call to reread prophecy when I was far from "home," with *home*

being a concept I found in the Aleutians, the earthly substitute for *another world*, one still to come ... in Dutch, a person could purchase a T-shirt with the silkscreened logo, *It's Not the End of the World, But You Can See It From Here*.

A Christian should be able to see the end of this age, the end of this *kosmos*, the end of this world from here, 2013, as scandal, turmoil, and revolution against the status quo sets human person against human person, and ammunition manufacturers run production machinery at full capacity ... President Obama has caused Americans to purchase more *black rifles* than any threat ever posed by foreign enemies: it is the firearms industry that has been most *stimulated* by the President's economic programs, with his own Administration becoming a major trafficker of guns and ammo.

The author of Matthew's Gospel, in understanding the things of God through possession of the spirit of God, understood that because Jesus entered the person while the person was still a sinner and that the person by his or her lawlessness crucified Jesus, the person, having received mercy from God, will begin to walk as Jesus walked when the Father returns this indwelling Christ Jesus to life. Thus, what appears from the outside to be spiritual mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is the indwelling of Christ while the person remains a sinner; while the person remains as Jesus' first disciples were while they followed Jesus, walking in this world as Jesus walked, but walking in this world as repentant Israelites, baptized in John's baptism.

Sabbatarian Christians remain as Jesus' first disciples were, a mixed bag of faithful but not yet born of spirit disciples, doubters, and betrayers. Few Sabbatarians are as Peter was, who attracted the attention of the Adversary—and those who have attract the attention of the Adversary will struggle to escape from the Adversary and will deny Christ through physical thinking:

From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man." (Matt 16:21–23)

Few endtime Sabbatarians are as Peter was, or are as John and James were. Most really don't believe Jesus for they don't understand the things of God: they are not born of God. They remain committed to literal readings of Scripture, insisting that the Bible is the infallible word of God, when imbedded in the Bible are a humanly inspired Gospel [Luke], a Sophist novel [Acts], and pseudepigrapha, three epistles that claim to be by Paul [1st & 2nd Timothy, Titus] but differ in style and content from what Paul wrote.

Before preceding, more needs to be said about Sabbatarian Christians who attract the attention of the Adversary as Peter did: before receiving the holy spirit and spiritual birth, Peter repented bitterly of betraying Christ through thrice denying being a disciple of Christ Jesus before the rooster crowed a third time ... a Christian denies Christ when the Christian doesn't walk in this world as Jesus walked. And human reasoning and the desires of the flesh inevitably prove to be

the cause for such denial: the flesh still rules over the person and the inner self of the person doesn't rule the flesh. Indeed, the inner self not yet born of spirit cannot truly rule over the fleshly body in which this inner self dwells; so when the Adversary goes after this person, the person will fail God, not something that surprises God, who waits for the person to repent and again get about following Christ, with the power of the flesh weakened and the inner self strengthened through each failure that will continue on even after spiritual birth, but at a different level. Only at the Second Passover liberation of Israel will the war for righteousness truly move from inside the person to outside the person. But by then, the war will, for the Elect, be won, a subject for a later discussion.

Although the New Testament was composed in Greek for primarily a Greek speaking audience, the importance of the New Testament being in Greek is that its words are "complete," lacking only a godly assignment of meaning to them. Unlike the Hebrew and Aramaic of the Old Testament or the Arabic of the Quran, the New Testament is a collection of self-complete texts that are not dependent upon the reader to supply vowel pointing to consonant clusters: the words as linguistic icons [signifiers] are complete. These New Testaments texts are not dependant upon any additional human act to complete words, with the human addition of vowel sounds ensuring that Semitic texts can only be "humanly read" throughout history.

Note: any text composed in a partially alphabetized language such as a Semitic language relies upon tradition for its reading; relies upon a continued reading of the text from composition to the present; relies upon readers to supply the vowels needed to transform inscribed consonant clusters into words. Thus, any text written in a partially alphabetized language is received as an incomplete text that relies upon the reader for its completion, with the reader completing the text through the reader's understanding of what word and meaning should be represented by the consonant cluster. Therefore, any Semitic language text is, by its incompleteness, ripe for abuse even if continually read generation after generation. No Semitic text is received inherently complete so that it can be figuratively shelved for nearly two millennial before being reread with the assignment of godly meaning to its words at the end of the age.

If received New Testament texts were in a Semitic language, these texts could not be "proof read" to determine veracity; for they were never read to determine their genuineness in the past. How do modern readers of the *Quran* know whether Mohammad spoke the words their teachers claim Mohammad spoke? Did Mohammad speak similar words, the difference between a *library* and a *book* or a *writer*? The Arabic consonant cluster is the same.

How does the reader of Semitic texts know what vowels to assign to consonant clusters? The reader knows the vowels to be assigned because the reader has been taught, generation after generation, which vowels to assign to a consonant cluster; for the vowels assigned transform the text in subtle but significant ways: a book of peace can easily become a book of war, with this transformation coming through who has taught whom to assign vowels to consonant clusters and thereby complete the text.

Mohammad wrote down nothing; so the *Quran* isn't the writings of Mohammad as the Torah is the writings of mostly Moses, who after inscribing a partially alphabetized passage, recited the passage to Joshua so that Joshua would know what vowels to assign to the consonant clusters: "Then [YHWH] said to Moses, 'Write this [an account of the defeat of Amalek] as a memorial in a book and **recite it in the ears of Joshua**, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven'" (Ex 17:14 double emphasis added).

But the House of Judah lost the Book of the Covenant for long enough that no one observed the Passover as Moses commanded between the Judges and King Josiah, meaning that Moses' writings went unread for generations. Moses' recitation of his writings was lost before the House of Judah was taken to Babylon; so the vowels Moses used in his recitation of his inscribed consonant clusters to Joshua could only be speculated upon after the Book of the Covenant was initially lost. Plus, languages change structurally: never vocalized linguistic determinatives used by Moses became proper names post Babylon, and today are part of the vocalized text for Sacred Names heretics.

All readings of the *Quran* and of the Old Testament are of human persons, with readers completing the text by assigning what a particular reader deems as appropriate vowels to inscribed consonant clusters. All readings of the *Quran* and of the Old Testament are not of God, a theological dilemma that places tradition and traditional readings in the position of God. Regardless of whether Muslims or Jews want to accept the reality of their sacred text being inscribed in partially alphabetized languages, the inscription of their sacred text in a Semitic language that they, themselves, have to complete by supplying roughly half of every word to the scribed text says through demonstration that their sacred text is not of God ... Moses cast to the ground and broke the tablets of stone on which the Lord wrote the ten living words.

Although the Lord told Moses, "Cut for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke" (Ex 34:1), the reality was that Moses wrote down the words of the Second Sinai Covenant: "And [YHWH] said to Moses, 'Write these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.' So he was there with [YHWH] forty days and forty nights. He neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments" (vv. 27–28).

Unlike the First Sinai Covenant that was ratified by blood (Ex 24:5–8), the Second Sinai Covenant (Ex chap 34) was ratified by Moses entering into the presence of the Lord, with the evidence of Moses having done so seen by all of Israel through the glory that shone on Moses' face, glory that caused Moses to place a veil over his face, a veil which the Apostle Paul claimed remained in place for Israel to his day:

Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day

whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. (2 Cor 3:12–16)

What did this veil conceal? The physical manifestation of the glory that came from having entered into the presence of the Lord; thus, natural Israel and all of rabbinical Judaism cannot know the things of God for by their denial of Christ Jesus, they cut themselves off from the Lord. The rebellion of Israel at Mount Sinai in the gold calf incident was of more importance than rabbinical Judaism to this day understands; for when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the second pair of stone tablets, apart from the eternal Second Sinai Covenant, Moses added a seemingly innocent provision:

Moses assembled all the congregation of the people of Israel and said to them, "These are the things that [YHWH] has commanded you to do. Six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to [YHWH]. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. You shall kindle no fire in all your dwelling places on the Sabbath day." (Ex 35:1–3)

In the initial Sinai Covenant (Ex chap 20–24), observance of the Sabbath served as a memorial to creation of all that has been made. In the Moab Covenant that is made in addition to the eternal Sinai Covenant (Deut chap 29–32), observance of the Sabbath serves as a memorial to Israel's liberation from bondage in Egypt. But in the eternal Second Sinai Covenant, observance of the Sabbath serves to remind Israel and the Lord what the Lord declared to Moses: "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'" (Ex 32:33–34).

By being commanded not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath, Israel was reminded that it could have no life in God's presence, that a veil would separate Israel from the glory of God ... death reigned over all humanity from Adam to Moses (Rom 5:14), a human man who entered into the glorified presence of the Lord and was the first to do so (although both Abraham and Jacob had contact with the Lord, the Lord appeared to them as a man, not as God).

The holy mountain of Sinai separated Moses from Israel, a people who rebelled against the Lord and would not listen to Him in Egypt, nor afterwards even though the people of Israel had promised to do all that the Lord commanded, a promise they could not keep for forty days. Thus, Israel at Sinai were as angels were that left their first estate of belief and obedience. And Sabbath observance for Israel, unable to kindle a fire on the Sabbath, reminded (or at least should have) Israel of their national unbelief that led to open rebellion against the Lord at Sinai, with this unbelief eventually keeping the nation that left Egypt and was numbered in the census of the second year—except for Joshua and Caleb—from entering into God's rest, the Promised Land.

However, to understand that the prohibition against kindling a fire on the Sabbath is a prohibition against entering into the presence of God is to understand a spiritual thing, a thought of God, and thereby requires the person to have the spirit [*pneuma*] of God. Likewise, to understand that sacred texts in

fully alphabetized languages such as Greek are inherently complete but complete apart from the assignment of meaning to “completed words” is to understand that the prophecies of Revelation can be sealed and kept secret through faulty [human] assignment of meaning to the words John wrote even though the words would seem to precluded the visions from being sealed and kept secret ...

I do not add sound or vowels to the Greek texts of the canonical New Testament; rather, I give to the completed words [linguistic icons] I receive “meaning” or linguistic objects. Another person can assign differing meaning to the same words. For example,

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. Whoever says "I know Him" but does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps His word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in Him: whoever says He abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked. (1 John 2:1–6)

For the Apostle John, “sin” is the transgression [breaking] of the Law (1 John 3:4), something that John claims sons of God cannot continue doing (*vv.* 6–10). Thus, the *Christian* who walks as Jesus walked, following Paul as Paul imitated Jesus (1 Cor 11:1), imitating the 1st-Century churches of God in Christ Jesus that were in Judea (1 Thess 2:14), will keep the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week as Moses commanded; for again, the Sabbath transforms from being a memorial of creation under the First Sinai Covenant to the creation (“For in six days [YHWH] made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore [YHWH] blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” — Ex 20:11) to being a memorial under the Moab Covenant to Israel’s liberation (“You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and [YHWH] your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore [IHWH] your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.” — Deut 5:15).

The Sabbaths of God—all of them—are memorials to liberation. To **not** keep these Sabbaths, weekly and annual, reveals that the Christian has not been liberated from death, meaning that the Christian has not yet been born of spirit as a son of God in a resurrection like that of Jesus Christ when He rose from the dead in baptism and received the indwelling breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the bodily form of a dove. And no Sabbatarian Christian can keep the Sabbaths of God while using the calculated rabbinical calendar to determine when the annual Sabbaths of God occur; e.g., in 2013, no Christian observing the annual Sabbaths as determined by Judaism will have kept these annual Sabbaths, but will be before God as 8th-day Christians are, having substituted the oracles of men for the oracles of God. For where in Old Testament Scripture does it say when to begin the sacred year? Nowhere. The Passover is to be sacrificed at even on the 14th day of the first month in the spring of the year. But Old Testament Scripture is silent

when to begin the spring of the year—and the practice of the Second Temple, at best suspect, was to never begin the year before the spring equinox. However, in 2013, rabbinical Judaism began its sacred year—as did Catholic Christendom—before the spring equinox, thereby placing themselves at odds with Christ Jesus, the sacrificed Passover Lamb of God, slain on the 14th day of the first month in a year like 2013; slain in late April, not at the end of March.

No Christian or Sabbatarian Christian who took the sacraments of bread and wine according to the rabbinical calendar in 2013 covered his or her sins in the heavenly realm; so it is just as well that none are truly born of spirit, meaning that none have yet received a second breath of life, the breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the breath of Christ [*pneuma Christou*]. They are not yet spiritually living sons of God.

Under the best of circumstances, proving that the Book of Acts is a Sophist novel to all Christians would be difficult, especially when very few Christians have ever encountered any other Sophist novel and when no other historical record of the early Christian Church exists—but why should any inscribed account of the early Church exist? When the early Church expected Christ to return momentarily there would have been no need to write about what was occurring, especially when not much was occurring as evidenced by how little is written in secular accounts (four mentions) about Christ Jesus in the first hundred years after Calvary. Only when the Church as the Body of Christ was dead from want of the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] did the Christian Church begin to rapidly grow. But by then, meanings differing from those of the first Apostles were being assigned to Paul’s words; however, because Greek is a fully alphabetized language, an endtime generation of Christians is able to assign non-traditional meanings of Paul’s words, to John’s words, to Peter’s words, with these non-traditional meanings actually being of God and agreeing with Moses [*the Son*].

The Adversary knew from the beginning of the Christian Movement that there would be an endtime resurrection of the Body of Christ; so being more subtle than 1st or 2nd Century Christians, the Adversary caused confusion to reign within the Jesus Movement, with 2nd-Century Ebionite Christians rejecting Luke’s Gospel as a valid text as well as rejecting the first two chapters of Matthew’s Gospel. Marconite Christians of the 2nd and 3rd Centuries used an abridged/rewritten form of Luke’s Gospel as their principle text. And proto-Orthodox Christian theologians “borrowed” here and there and included all of Matthew’s Gospel, Luke’s Gospel and Acts, as well as the Pastoral Epistles that supported the formation of a clergy or clerical class, in their determination of a theological canon. In doing so, traditional texts read by established congregations of mostly proto-Orthodox Christians formed the New Testament, even when these texts disagreed with one another.

God actually had little to do with either the writing of New Testament texts or with the canonization of Scripture, a claim that will prove to be troubling to many endtime Christians that eagerly want to believe that Christ Jesus is the soon-coming Messiah, but a claim that resonates within academia.

Yes, I can prove that Matthew's Gospel isn't historical, but Matthew's Gospel doesn't claim to be historical despite this Gospel's opening lines about the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, but how so—

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child [*ek pneumatos 'agion* — by spirit holy]. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her [*ek pneumatos estin 'agion*]. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus [*'Iesoun*], for He will save His people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called His name Jesus. (Matt 1:18–25)

According to Matthew's Gospel, King David is not a birth ancestor of Jesus the Nazarene; for Joseph was not the father of Jesus. Therefore, the genealogy of Jesus through Joseph that the author of Matthew's Gospel supplies is biologically meaningless and can only pertain to Jesus coming as the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Messiah. Jesus is related to David through both being kings over all of Israel, with Jesus, not Solomon, being the referent about whom the Lord said,

But that same night the word of [YHWH] came to Nathan, "Go and tell my servant David, "Thus says [YHWH]: Would you build me a house to dwell in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, "Thus says [YHWH] of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And *I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies.* Moreover, [YHWH] declares to you that [YHWH] will make you a house. *When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.* I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house

and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever." In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David. (2 Sam 7:4–17 emphasis added)

If the offspring [seed] in whom David's throne is established forever were Solomon, then what the Lord tells Solomon stands at odds with what the Lord told David:

As soon as Solomon had finished building the house of [YHWH] and the king's house and all that Solomon desired to build, [YHWH] appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. And [YHWH] said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you have made before me. I have consecrated this house that you have built, by putting my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time. And *as for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.' But if you turn aside from following me, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes that I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land that I have given them, and the house that I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight, and Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.* And this house will become a heap of ruins. Everyone passing by it will be astonished and will hiss, and they will say, 'Why has [YHWH] done thus to this land and to this house?' Then they will say, 'Because they abandoned [YHWH] their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them. Therefore [YHWH] has brought all this disaster on them.'" (1 King 9:1–9 emphasis added)

The promise made to King David was unconditional and followed demonstrated obedience, but not so the promise made to Solomon that though made twenty years into Solomon's forty year reign was still conditioned upon Solomon's faithfulness. And because Solomon proved to be unfaithful, beginning early in his reign when he married the Egyptian princess in a marriage alliance with Pharaoh; for no Israelite man was to marry a foreign woman—and it was by Solomon's marriages to many foreign women that Solomon sinned and lost for David kingship over the House of Israel, kingship that went to his servant Jeroboam, leaving his son Rehoboam king over the House of Judah and defeated by Shishak, king of Egypt, who took away the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house ... Shishak took away everything King Solomon had sought to secure when Solomon made his marriage alliance with Pharaoh. The Lord will not be mocked, which is what Solomon unwittingly did through his various marriage alliances that were truly meaningless if the Lord had appointed a place for His people Israel to dwell in peace and safety according to His unconditional promise to King David.

Unconditional versus conditional: Solomon knew from the beginning of his reign that there were conditions for his rule:

Solomon loved [YHWH], walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. At Gibeon [YHWH] appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." And Solomon said, "*You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day.* And now, O [YHWH] my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?" It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. ***And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.***" And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants. (1 Kings 3:3–15 emphasis and double emphasis added)

Solomon knew from the beginning of his reign that he could not do as he did when he turned his heart away from the Lord because of his foreign wives, giving in to them and their idolatrous practices (1 Kings 11:4–8). Thus, the unconditional promises made to King David was not and could not be fulfilled through biological descendants of King David, something the author of Matthew's Gospel knew and understood. Yet this author retrieved these promises through his genealogy of Christ Jesus, a non-historical genealogy that is neither prophetic nor explanatory.

* * *

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