

Commentary — From the Margins *Sanctuary Cities*

The cities that you give to the Levites shall be the six cities of refuge, where you shall permit the manslayer to flee ... and [YHWH] spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, then you shall select cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person without intent may flee there. The cities shall be for you a refuge from the avenger, that the manslayer may not die until he stands before the congregation for judgment. ... The avenger of blood shall himself put the murderer to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death. ... But if he [the manslayer] pushed him [the man who died] suddenly without enmity, or hurled anything on him without lying in wait or used a stone that could cause death, and without seeing him dropped it on him, so that he died, though he was not his enemy and did not seek his harm, then the congregation shall judge between the manslayer and the avenger of blood, in accordance with these rules. (Num 35:6, 9–12, 19, 22–24)

3.

The question must again be asked: how is life in this world like being released from incarceration so that the Christian can do menial work? And again, the answer loops back to a single indwelling breath of life versus two: the person with one indwelling breath of life, the "breath" [used metonymically] that animates the flesh, needs an equally physical signifier to convey the absence of spiritual or heavenly life. Thus, this physical signifier becomes enslavement; becomes the person being a bondservant, a slave; becomes the loss of liberty that would otherwise permit the person to obey God. The person not born of spirit can verify the inner absence of a second breath of life—the indwelling spirit of Christ in which dwells the spirit of God—by the person examining his or her attitude toward keeping the Commandments ... what excuse for not keeping the Commandments comes to this person's mind? Perhaps, *Christ fulfilled the Commandments so you don't have-to?* Christ Jesus is the Christian's older brother. If in the physical the Christian's older brother kept the Commandments, would the Christian automatically be keeping the Commandments? No, not so. So why would this be so in the spiritual? Why would Jesus keeping the Commandments equate to you, a lawless Christian, keeping the Commandments? Because, you say, *you have the indwelling of Jesus in you?* Really? Jesus is going to keep the Commandments inside of you, but you're not going to keep them—how do you know that Jesus is inside you if you are not walking in this world as Jesus walked? How do you know that somewhere way back behind you, you parted company with Jesus?

In John's Gospel, Jesus told Nicodemus,

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when

he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?" (John 3:3–12)

The person born of water isn't born of baptism, which is always unto death, but is born of the water of the womb and as such is born of flesh and is "flesh" ... the person born of spirit is "spirit" and as such is not flesh. This latter *person* [inner man] isn't confined to space-time, but is free to come and go as the wind goes where it will.

The inner self resurrected from death through the indwelling of Christ Jesus is not a physical entity, and is truly free. However, the outer self that houses this now-living inner self remains confined inside of space-time by the physicality of the flesh. Therefore, the city of refuge analogy holds, with the fractal of the negligent Israelite in one of six cities of refuge likened to the children of Israel in the Promised Land, a type of the Sabbath and of heaven.

So how is a Christian's life in this present world like life in a city of refuge, the person being free to work but not free to come and go?

Understanding of *not being free to come and go* needs to be established; for Americans, in particular, can quit a job in Maine and take a job in Alaska or in California, or quit a job in Louisiana and take a job in North Dakota. But where has the American really gone? He or she hasn't left the North American continent; hasn't left the Earth; hasn't really gone far at all. And the earth is a minor planet orbiting a minor star in an arm of a spiral galaxy that is one of apparently many galaxies created suddenly inside the Abyss, these galaxies being the debitage resulting from the war in heaven that produced a rent in the fabric of heaven; these galaxies being created inside the death chamber in which rebelling angels have been confined as they await death.

The physicality of a person's fleshly body prevents the person from escaping the low viscosity tidal pool that is space-time, the person's body bound in this pool by gravity. Hence, the person, manufacturing the illusion that he or she is free, merrily works for the Adversary, again *the man*, as the person (functioning as a pawn on a chess board) demonstrates the viability or non-viability of self-governance, this demonstration ongoing for the past five-plus millennia. And what has been disclosed so far? Humanity cannot govern itself, but is destined to destroy even the field on which the demonstration occurs.

If a person truly born of spirit were today free from his or her involuntary servitude to disobedience that comes through the fleshly body's continued assignment to

disobedience, the person wouldn't experience the indwelling war between mind and flesh that the Apostle Paul described:

For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the Law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the spirit and not in the old way of the written code. What then shall we say? That the Law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the Law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the Law had not said, "You shall not covet." But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the Law, sin lies dead. I was once alive apart from the Law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the Law, that it is good. So now *it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.* So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the Law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the Law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. (Rom 7:5–23 emphasis added)

Until the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel [the nation circumcised of heart], sin/disobedience shall continue to dwell in the fleshly members of even truly born of spirit disciples, with the inner self that delights in the Law of God fighting for control of the person ... the war has already been won in heaven, but battles still have to be fought in this world; for until the inner self has complete control of the outer self, the outer self will do those things that the inner self hates. And this Paul realized but didn't understand: he diagnosed the problem, but his understanding of "conversion" didn't included the fleshly body of the person continuing to be consigned to disobedience after "conversion." However, the fleshly body is, indeed, still consigned to disobedience, what Paul couldn't explain and didn't understand—and when consigned to disobedience, the person isn't "free" but is still a slave of *the man*.

Yes, if the person truly born of spirit doesn't have complete control over his or her fleshly body, the person isn't truly free regardless of what Paul writes when he says,

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the Law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. (Rom 8:1–4)

Again, (excuse the redundancy) what Paul didn't understand is that the inner self of the person truly born of spirit was in the 1st-Century CE and is presently as physical Israelite males were when the people of Israel were enslaved in Egypt. The living inner self of the person truly born of spirit can escape from indwelling disobedience by fleeing beyond Sin's borders [meaning, by keeping the Commandments] as Moses escaped from Pharaoh by fleeing into the land of Midian. But as Moses' wife [the Cushite/Egyptian woman about whom Miriam spoke — Number 12:1] remained in Egypt even though Moses escaped, the fleshly body of the person remains consigned to disobedience—and will remain consigned to disobedience until the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel.

When the God of Abraham told Moses that he would make a nation from him, Moses, the God of Abraham never changed His mind: “And the Lord said to Moses, ‘I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. Now therefore *let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you*’” (Ex 32:9–10 emphasis added).

This great nation awaited creation until after there was a second Abraham: “And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise” (Gal 3:29). So the great nation the God of Abraham told Moses that He would make from him, Moses, is the assembly of inner selves that constitutes the temple of God; for with spiritual birth through the indwelling of the spirit of Christ and by extension, by the indwelling of Christ Jesus, God created a spiritually fugitive nation of *Israel*, free in the mind to keep the Commandments.

Has any American asked him or herself if he or she is truly free to serve the God of Abraham as Abraham was “free”? Abraham owned no property other than the field that held the cave in which he buried Sarah—this world belongs to the dead, not to the living. For a person to hold an ownership position in this world is for the person to number him or herself among the dead.

The preceding should seem illogical: Americans are “free.” Just ask most any American. But are American Christians convinced that they should walk in this world as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6), imitating Paul as he imitated Jesus (1 Cor 11:1), imitating the churches of God in Christ Jesus that were in 1st-Century Judea (1 Thess 2:14)? No, as a collective, they are not. They certainly are “free” to take advantage of one-day parking lot clearance sales, that “day” always being the Sabbath. Sure the American Christian can buy at such a one-day sale, but the Christian cannot then keep the Sabbath as Jesus kept the Sabbath—and is not Jesus the Lord of the Sabbath? Certainly He is. So by taking economic advantage of that one-day clearance sale, the Christian pushes Jesus out of the person's life for that day by ignoring the Sabbath; for Jesus didn't change the Sabbath to

another day—the following day—but kept the Sabbath as the Sabbath pertained to the inner person, the soul of the person [*psuche*] ...

Until Moses, involuntary death reigned over all persons descended from Noah and by extension, from Adam. But on the plains of Moab, the children of Israel were offered the choice of life or death. If these descendants of the nation that left Egypt forty years earlier chose life, they were to keep the Commandments:

See, I [Moses] have set before you today life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in His ways, and by keeping His commandments and His statutes and His rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying His voice and holding fast to Him, for He is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. (Deut 30:15–20)

The children of Israel chose death—

American Christians, when offered the same choice, nearly unanimously choose death by attempting to enter into God’s presence on the day after the Sabbath, thereby dictating to God when they can, in spirit, come before Him. So much for death reigning from Adam to Moses, who entered into the presence of God when he was called before the Lord.

Who is the American Christian that has been called before the Lord as Moses was called to come to the summit of Mount Sinai? No one has been. So how are American Christians to come before the Lord? They are to come on the Sabbath as the spiritual reality of the children of Israel, the dark shadow and copy of the second Israel, the assembly of inner selves circumcised of heart.

Abraham built no buildings, no city, no monuments to himself. Rather, he dwelt as a sojourning prince in the land of others [in the land of the Amorites and Hittites], even though this land was promised to his heirs who, when they entered this Promised Land, did so as the chosen Passover lamb of God, condemned to death despite the prospect of long life being offered to these children of Israel if they would only “obey the commandments of the Lord [their] God ... by loving the Lord [their] God, by walking in His ways, and by keeping His commandments and His statutes and His rules” (Deut 30:16).

The children of Israel that crossed the Jordan had not escaped death: they had only delayed death if they *kept the commandments of the Lord with their hearts and minds*. They were still under sentence of death; for these children of Israel were physical, not spiritual. These Commandments that Moses delivered to them were for their fleshly bodies to kept so that their fleshly bodies would not die prematurely. By extension, these

same Commandments when moved from physical to spiritual are expressed by having love for God, neighbor, and brother—and when the inner self [the soul, *psuche*] of the person expresses love for God, neighbor, and brother, this non-physical inner self will live forever outside of space-time, the reality of what Paul wrote when he said,

For God shows no partiality. For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law. For it is not the hearers of the Law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the Law who will be justified. For when Gentiles, who do not have the Law, by nature do what the Law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the Law. They show that the work of the Law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. (Rom 2:11–16)

Likewise, the reality of what the author of Matthew's Gospel has his *Jesus* say, When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. Before Him will be gathered all the nations, and He will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He will place the sheep on His right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?" And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me."

Then He will say to those on His left, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, saying, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?" Then He will answer them, saying, "Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matt 25:31–46)

So there is no mistake about what I write, under the New Covenant (which is not yet in effect because the Law is not yet written on hearts and placed in minds — Heb 8:10), the Law is not abolished but moves from regulating the acts of the body and the actions of the hands to regulating the thoughts of the mind and the desires of the heart. And when the thoughts of the mind and desires of the heart are to keep the Commandments

out of love for God, neighbor, and brother, then the inside of the *clay cup* that is the person's fleshly body will be clean, and when the inside of this *cup* is clean, the entire cup is clean for when filled with spirit [*pneuma Theou*] the body will do what the mind and heart of the person desires.

The preceding is what the Apostle Paul didn't understand when he wrote,

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. (Rom 7:15–19)

Until the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel, the fleshly bodies of humanity will remain consigned to disobedience and by extension, to death. However, with the Second Passover, all Christians (as the reality of the ancient nation of Israel that left Egypt in the days of Moses) will be filled with spirit and thereby liberated from indwelling sin and death. But as with ancient Israel, the majority of greater Christendom—even though filled with the spirit of God—will rebel against God 220 days into the *Affliction*, the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years. This majority of greater Christendom will rebel as the Israel rebelled in the wilderness of Paran when the twelve spies returned from scouting the Promised Land.

4.

Can humankind escape from the earth? Certainly, intelligent men and women are working on escaping, such as a manned mission to Mars. But because of the physicality of humanity, no human person can escape from the created universe. In fact, even in their thoughts, no human person can escape—and this is not what greater Christianity teaches; for the business of Christian pastors and teachers is to convince mortal human beings that at death those who have done good shall escape to heaven where they will do things these pastors do not address. But the underlying problem is the reality of *<perception>* ... what thought can a person think without the thought perceiving something that is physical or tangible? What experience can be remembered that isn't physical, even if the experience never occurred but is only imagined? And this is why Christian pastors and teachers cannot tell parishioners what the souls of these parishioners will do once they escape to heaven.

What glorified sons of God won't do is sing praises to themselves ... singing praises to God is for the servants of God. Singing praises to God is what angels do; what not-born-of-spirit humanity does. The man Jesus is recorded to have sung one hymn: "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives" (Matt 26:30), with Jesus being included in the *<they>*. But whether the man Jesus actually sang a hymn cannot be determined for the author of Matthew's Gospel has here copied Mark's Gospel (Mark 14:26), which apparently John Mark assembled from untangling Peter's *chreiai* and crafting a timeline of Jesus' ministry even though John Mark never heard Jesus speak ... apparently, Peter sang a hymn. The other disciples sang a hymn. And this would be appropriate for none of the disciples were yet born of spirit. Hence, for the author of

Matthew's Gospel to include the borrowed passage from Mark's Gospel is chronologically significant; for the "Jesus" of Matthew's Gospel is the indwelling Christ Jesus, the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] that would, post Calvary, penetrate and give life to the spirits of His disciples. It is this spirit of Christ that gives life to all who are drawn from this world by God the Father (John 6:44) and delivered to Christ, with the spirit of Christ penetrating the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*] that is in every person, but only after the reality of what Paul writes, by the hand of Tertius (Rom 16:22), occurs: "For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:7–8).

Because all human thought—perception—is of what is physical, the man Jesus' death at Calvary had to occur. He had to be crucified so we can imagine what it means for Jesus to die for us while we are still sinners. We cannot *perceive* what it means for Jesus to pay with His life for our past sins and to bear our present unintentional transgressions of the Law [the reality of the *Azazel*] without being able to imagine Roman crucifixion of political dissidents ...

Permit me to restate the preceding in another manner: unfortunately, Christians know so little about Moses that they cannot read Paul's epistles that have the "Israel" of record moving from the circumcised-in-the-flesh nation to being the circumcised-of-heart nation that is no longer stubborn, unwilling to believe God and do what He commands ... Paul's *Israel* is not an assembly of fleshly bodies, but the assembly of inner selves [*psuchas*] that exists outside of experience, outside of perception, outside of the vitality of the flesh. And the inner self of a person—the soul [*psuche*] of a person—is not physical and can only be imagined within the scope of the physicality of a living person.

Experience is physical; is an accounting of things that happened to the person. Perception is also physical; that is, it is of the conscious mind—a person perceives thought. Hence, to lust for an unlawful liaison is to commit adultery regardless of whether the experience of adultery occurs (Matt 5:27–28). The perception of adultery is "adultery." So lusting for what the person imagines a liaison with another person would be like will have the perception of the liaison being "real" even though the experience might not be. And this is a point that the author of Matthew's Gospel alone makes.

The entirety of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt chaps 5–7) is perception without experience.

The preceding is a subject that 18th-Century philosophers addressed as these philosophers discovered what Buddhism had long known about the difficulty of escaping perception—

Off the Shelikof Strait side of Afognak Island, I hung a gear anchor when longlining halibut. The seas were to my starboard beam and were big enough to be uncomfortable ... I had no spare gear anchors, and in pulling on the anchor—in attempting to pull the anchor out of whatever crevasse it was wedged—the heavy seas threatened to swamp the boat, which suddenly had a forty degree tilt because of being held down by the anchor that wouldn't come loose.

I was in serious trouble and was going to have to cut the 3/4 inch buoy line loose to save the boat. But the knife at hand was dull and I didn't have time to "saw" through the

length of discarded crabline that I used for a buoy line, and I couldn't get the line off the cleat around which I had clinched it.

Just as the big sea of a set was coming aboard. I hollered aloud that I needed help and I needed it right now.

The sea thirty yards out from me all around the boat went suddenly flat, the surface of the sea vibrating in two, three inch high very rapid spikes, appearing to collectively approximate the energy of the heavy seas beyond the bubble that now surrounded me ... that was how I perceived the seas inside of the sixty yard wide dome. The experience of imminent swamping was replaced by the experience of a mini tidal rip of immense vigor. It was as if someone had placed a hand on the prevailing seas that remained visually evident thirty yards from me, thereby flattening the seas when I hollered for help.

I put the boat in reverse, something I hadn't been able to do and still try to free the buoy line clinched to the cleat near the eight-inch power block I used to pull groundline. And in pulling backwards, I got the gear anchor loose ... as soon as the anchor was aboard, the seas returned.

For a minute—probably closer to three minutes—I experienced a flattened sea that had no natural explanation; for the sea didn't suddenly go calm but continued to transfer the energy of the heavy rollers, but in very short and rapid peaks a few inches high. The sea seemed alive and seemed to struggle against what was holding it down.

The perception of divine intervention when I hollered was “physical” ... did divine intervention occur? I believe it did. But could I “prove” that it had? No. But the probability of a coincidental flattening of the seas when I hollered would have been less than a person getting twice struck by lightning in the same location off Afognak Island. The odds would have been statistically zero. Yet there will be unbelievers that insist my experience had to be imagined—and how could it not be imagined since “knowing” anything comes through the perception of the reality.

Unbelievers will say that because I wanted to believe help was immediately accessible [I wouldn't have hollered if I didn't believe], then in hollering I fooled my sense of perception into believing that seas were flattened. No, not so. Seas were really flattened. I survived a rookie mistake—the incident happened during the first year I longlined halibut—because I wasn't then supposed to die, a deterministic perception based upon experience (particularly that of the red fir snag falling across me four years earlier, a story told in the poem “That Snag” found in the collection *Upriver, Beyond the Bend*).

The conscious mind perceives what is physical even when it comes to intangible subjects such as love ... a thought that can be *thought* is ultimately about what can be perceived; therefore, the reality of a divine entity that is not physical and that cannot be physically imagined inherently produces problems for the person perceptive enough to realize that all thought is based upon experience and perception.

As the fleshly body of a physical person is trapped inside space-time [the physical creation], the thoughts of a physical person are trapped by the perception of physical experiences. Therefore, the invisible things of God are knowable through the visible things that have been made, with the visible preceding the invisible (*cf.* Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 15:46). For to know a thing of God is to perceive a physical thing or a physical

experience as a shadow and type of a spiritual thing—and this leaves an untouched treasure-trove of heavenly experiences that cannot be perceived today because they cast no physical shadows.

But within the realm of what can be physically experienced is the reality of confinement in a city of refuge for the unintentional death of another person, with this experience being life on this third rock from the sun, again a minor star in one arm of a spiral galaxy, and with the duration of confinement being until the death of the High Priest, with Christ Jesus being the High Priest of circumcised-of-heart Israel ... it is the idea of the inner self being free to pursue experience but not free to come and go [not free to leave this city of refuge] that underlies *Christ dying for us while we were still sinners*.

Again, a human person is typified in the marriage relationship, with the inner self being the head of the outer self. This will have the “man” in a marriage representing the inner self, and will have the “woman” representing the outer self, the fleshly body.

When the children of Israel entered into the Promised Land amid violence, the children of Israel were analogous to a man entering his wife, an unresisted act of violence couched in the language of love; the wife representing the Promised Land. And the preceding, when added to the concept that Christ Jesus doesn't change but is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Heb 13:8), suggests that greater Christendom has ideologically dispossessed the people of outwardly circumcised Israel who were without faith, and in turn greater Christendom will be ideologically dispossessed by another people because of greater Christendom's lack of faith; lack of belief sufficient to produce obedience, with Paul again writing by the hand of Tertius,

So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. (Rom 6:11–19)

Christians are not imprisoned under the Law, but are free to believe God or not believe God ... the children of Israel had placed before them the choice of good or evil (Deut 30:15–20)—and they collectively chose evil. Therefore, ancient Israel was imprisoned under the Law in that an ancient Israelite lost his or her freedom to choose

for him or herself whether he or she would keep the Law. To not keep the Law should have caused the community to shun the transgressor if not stone the transgressor to death. Hence, when transgressors were not driven from the community or stoned, the community itself compromised the Law—and once the community compromised the Law, those Israelites who attempted to remain faithful such as the *sons of the prophets* in the days of Elisha were ostracized, driven from the temple and prevented from worshiping where faithful Israelites in the days of Solomon had worshiped.

The theological health of Israel, once the men of Israel rejected the Lord as their king, is historically disclosed by the theological health of Israel's king. Thus, endtime disciples can know what the common people of Israel believed during any generation by what the king believed—and with very few exceptions, Israel's kings [both of the House of Israel and of the House of Judah] were notorious idolaters.

The children of Israel in the Promised Land did not have the problem of illegal [undocumented] immigrants crossing Israel's borders. Israel was the alien population that had come *en masse* into the land of Canaan to dispossess the Amorites, Hittites, Girgashites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, "seven nations more numerous and mightier than" Israel (Deut 7:1). Israel was the problematic immigrant nation that overwhelmed the people of the land, with Israel's justification for invading the land of Canaan being that the God of Abraham had sent them into this land when the iniquity of Amorites was complete (Gen 15:16).

The concept of a deity bringing judgment upon a people because of what the people do or have done is central to the history of Israel, with delayed imposition of judgment causing thinking-humankind to ignore even the existence of this deity. Thus, the Apostle Paul said, by the hand of Tertius, in his treatise to the holy ones at Rome,

I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed *from faith for faith*, as it is written, "*The righteous shall live by faith.*" For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For His invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For *although they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.* (Rom 1:15–25 emphasis added)

In Greek, the concept of faith is “belief” of sufficient quality to cause the person to act upon his or her belief; thus for a Christian to say that he or she has faith in God is for the Christian to say that he or she believes God and acts on his or her belief.

If a Christian believes God, the Christian necessarily believes a man, with this “man” usually being the Apostle Paul ...

Sadly, greater Christendom cannot read Paul’s epistles without wringing the Law from them as if his epistles were old dishrags. But in the controversial Second Epistle of Peter—not written by the hand that wrote First Peter, that is not written by the hand of Silvanus—Peter (probably himself) wrote,

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to His promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by Him without spot or blemish, and at peace. And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother *Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability.* But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (2 Pet 3:10–18 emphasis added)

If the earth and the works done in it are exposed, with all things (“all things” are what possesses mass) being dissolved, then the people of God ought to be without spot or blemish; be without sin, with the Law by its very existence defining what is sin. Therefore, the people of God ought to keep the work of the Law, which is to produce love for God, neighbor, and brother. And how can a Christian express love for God by mocking Christ through ignoring the Law; through attempting to enter into heaven on the day after the Sabbath, the day He, Jesus—after being dead and buried for three days and three nights, then resurrected after the third day—entered into heaven as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering? Do Christians sincerely believe that the harvest of God cannot begin until they, personally, enter heaven? Do Christians not know that they constitute the reality of the two loaves baked from fine flour and with leavening that are waved on the High Sabbath that is the Feast of Weeks; that the harvest of God is gathered into barns, thrashed, and ground into flour during the period represented by the seven counted weeks? Are Christians so ignorant of what Moses declared that they cannot locate themselves in the plan of God?

Unfortunately, Christians know so little about Moses that they cannot read Paul's epistles that have the "Israel" of record moving from the circumcised-in-the-flesh nation to being the circumcised-of-heart nation that is no longer stubborn, unwilling to believe God and do what He commands ... Paul's *Israel* is not an assembly of fleshly bodies, but the assembly of inner selves [*psuchas*] that exists outside of experience, perception, or the vitality of the flesh.

Again, experience is physical; is the things or an accounting of things that happen to a person. Perception is also physical; that is, it is of the conscious mind—a person perceives thought so to lust for an unlawful liaison is to commit adultery regardless of whether the experience of adultery occurs (Matt 5:27–28). The perception of adultery is "adultery." The perception is "real" even though the experience might not be, now twice said.

Today, common Christians willfully and willingly transgress the Law for they have been taught for centuries that *Christians are not under the Law but are under grace* (from Rom 6:14, cited above). But when asked what does <grace> mean to the Christian, a nonsensical answer is given: *Grace is unmerited pardon of all sins, past, present, and future*. Really? What does Jesus say in John's Gospel,

The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. Truly, truly, *I say to you, whoever hears my word and **believes Him who sent me** has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.* Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself. And He has given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. *Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.* (John 5:22–29 emphasis and double emphasis added)

Without a remembrance of "evil" [transgressions] committed by Israel, there would be no basis for separating those who are resurrected to life from those who are resurrected to judgment and death ... without a remembrance of unbelief as manifested in disobedience that leads to death, there can be no basis for judgment or condemnation of the person.

The movement from physically circumcised Israel being the firstborn son of the God of Abraham (Ex 4:22) to Christ Jesus and those in whom the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou* — from Rom 8:9] dwells being the firstborn Son of the Most High God represents the movement of Israel going from being a physical nation to *Israel* being the nation circumcised of heart, a euphemistic expression for no longer being stubborn through a divine intervention, this intervention being receipt of a second "breath" of life, the spirit of Christ [again, *pneuma Christou*] penetrating [entering into] the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*]. To be truly *born again*, the Christian must receive the indwelling spirit of Christ and thereby pass from death to life without coming under

judgment (John 5:24, cited above); for when the person passes from death to life (that is, receives indwelling eternal life) the person does so from hearing the word [*logos*] of Jesus and believing the One who sent Jesus into this world. No other person has indwelling eternal life. No other person “chooses” to believe God the Father and become the willing slave of obedience (Rom 6:16); for any compulsion to keep the Law negates “faith,” the person’s willing belief of God that produces obedience to the Law.

My preceding paragraph will trouble the majority of greater Christendom, quasi-believers who profess with their mouths that Jesus is Lord and believe in their hearts that God the Father raised Jesus from death, but who steadfastly refuse to believe either the Father or the Son, believing instead a host of lawless teachers, pastors, and professional *clergymen*, the sexist identifier intentionally used for virtually all historic teachers of lawlessness have been biological males, spiritually castrated by the Adversary. These historic teachers of lawlessness have had their *maleness* turned inside out.

In moving from physical *cities of refuge* to truly spiritual sanctuary cities where the unintentional manslayer can escape the revenger of blood, both the spiritual manslayer and the spiritual revenger of blood need to be identified ... can there really be a spiritual manslayer, a person who unintentionally slays another person and is therefore subject to judgment? And the answer is, Yes, for the Christian pastor or teacher who is really a fat sheep shouldering weak sheep away from clean water and good pasture (see Ezek 34:17–23) comes under judgment for not having love for those weak in faith. For if Christian teachers truly had love for their fellow sheep—they are not shepherds, regardless of how badly they seek the glorified Christ Jesus’ authority, or seek the glorified David’s calling—they would teach their fellow sheep to walk in this world as Paul walked in Paul imitating Christ Jesus (1 Cor 11:1 *et al*). Instead they teach wannabe disciples to transgress the Law and thereby commit spiritual suicide. So for all of their wimpy handshakes and feigned piety, lawless pastors are spiritual murderers, worthy of the second death.

So what about physical sanctuary cities in this present age? Is it all right for civil authorities to pick and choose which laws they will obey?

A law that required a Christian to work on the Sabbath, or even to send children to school on the Sabbath runs counter to the Sabbath Commandment and would be a law I wouldn’t obey ... if a law existed that I wouldn’t obey as a matter of conscience, then yes, every person has not only the right but the obligation to ignore immoral laws. But the person ignoring a law must be willing to accept the consequences of the person’s civil disobedience. This means that civil officials of sanctuary cities must be willing to go to jail for their civil acts.

It is easy to make pronouncements about what a person would or wouldn’t do in a particular situation ... most people fold when they come under pressure to conform. Most Christians fold when it comes to keeping the Sabbath: keeping the Sabbath is just too hard in this present age. When was it ever easy? When was it easy to make marriage work? When was it easy to trust God to heal a person when the promise of healing isn’t there? When was it easy to await the coming of death? When was anything in this world truly easy?

For as long as the living inner self resides in a fleshly body, the inner self will have to deal with the problems of the flesh as a husband deals with his wife, not applying a heavy hand in any situation for the inner self has no way to force the fleshly body to do anything, but coaxing the fleshly body to manifest love for God, neighbor, and brother. For the fleshly body never gets to escape the physicality of space-time, never gets to leave a city of refuge.

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