

Commentary — From the Margins *Children of Promise*

The Apostle Paul writes concerning the patriarch Isaac and his descendants: “And not only so, but also when Rebecca had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of call—she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ As it is written, ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated’” (Rom 9:6–13 English Standard Version, used throughout).

As Americans, our cultural sense of justice tends to minimize the significance of divine election or calling. Our ideals are democratic, with every person created with equal rights and equal opportunity. We claim that this equality is self-evident. And though we do not fully implement this self-evident equality, we export it to the world, expecting other nations and cultures to embrace values that are really Greek, not Judaic.

Much of America claims to hold Judaic-Christian values without realizing from where the values held come. These values sculpt the conscience of the nation that President Bush referenced in his Maine speech about the difference between us and those who will behead enemies. These values position us in the world community. And these values insist that God loves no one more than He loves someone else, that God is love, that anyone at any time can decide to accept Jesus as the person's personal savior and so receive salvation.

Why was Esau, when still in the womb, hated and Jacob loved? Jacob wasn't honest when he deceived his father to receive the blessing that would normally have gone to the eldest son. He really wasn't an honest cattle breeder for his uncle. He was deceitful. Yet, he wrestled with God—and through doing so he prevailed with God, the meaning of his changed name: Israel.

The patriarch Jacob was not the type of person that Americans would today elect as their president. The deceitfulness of his past would forever be remembered, as it is in Scripture.

The Bible is not kind to its heroes. King David had Uriah the Hittite murdered so he could marry this non-Israelite's wife, Bathsheba. Abraham told Abimelech, king of Gerar, that Sarah was his sister. When Abimelech took Sarah for a wife, God came to the king in a dream and said, “Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman you have taken, for she is a man's wife” (Gen 20:3). God also told the king, “Now then, return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, so that he will pray for you, and you shall live” (v. 7). First, Abraham nearly gets the king killed because he hadn't told the king the truth (Sarah was his half-sister, so he hadn't lied), then the king has to ask Abraham to pray for him so that he might live. And we don't read in either antidote the values of America. We don't think of prophets telling half-truths.

Our sense of justice requires that more should have happened to David than the death of his son by Bathsheba—the son, apparently Bathsheba's firstborn, was innocent. Esau was innocent when in the womb. Both were, when their fates were determined, as innocent as the lambs sacrificed on the temple altar as the sin offerings for the lawlessness of the nation. Both were as innocent as Jesus remained when crucified at Calvary. And the American sense of justice requires that the guilty pay for their sins, not the innocent.

Jesus as the Lamb of God is the spiritual reality of ancient Israel's animal sacrifices. He is the offering given by God to redeem all firstborns (Exod 13:2, 15). And in a valid mental stretch, the firstborn of God created when Elohim [singular in usage] breathed life into Adam and created Eve from a rib in Adam's side, thereby creating humankind male and female (Gen 1:27) before resting on the seventh day, is the Apostle Paul's old man in a corruptible body. This firstborn of God, though, didn't include everyone who descended from Adam, but was limited to the children of promise who belonged to the patriarch Israel (Exod 4:22). Nor does the firstborn of God include "all who are descended from Israel" (Rom 9:6). Not all Israelites "belong to Israel" (same verse). The Apostle Paul writes that "it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring" (v. 8). The promise of God, salvation, is the mortal putting on immortality. The children of promise are the Apostle Paul's new creatures born from above in tabernacles of flesh.

The American sense of justice has, within the past century, produced and spread a theology that promises salvation to the fleshly tabernacle once this tabernacle has been redeemed by Christ Jesus. This theology of a bodily rapture would have the firstborn of God not really ever dying. This theology has Jesus not dying on the cross, but descending alive into hell to preach to wayward spirits. And this theology is Greek to its core.

Not all of Israel belonged to Israel. Not all of the spiritual nation belongs to the spiritual nation. Not all of those called to immortality through election and judgment will receive incorruptibility. Only those who hear the words of Jesus and believe the One who sent Him will receive everlasting life (John 5:24).

The Apostle Paul writes concerning the coming day of the Lord: "While people are saying, 'There is peace and security,' then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman" (1 Thess 5:3). Jesus compared His coming to labor pains (Matt 24:8). And the woman who will give birth is the second or last Eve, with the seven years of tribulation that will come upon the world being her hard labor pains of bringing many heirs of God to glory.

In Scripture, there are two Adams, the first physical, the last a life-giving spirit (1 Cor 15:45). The creation of the first Adam outside of Eden, with Adam there receiving the breath of life (Gen 2:7), the placing of Adam in Eden, Adam's naming of the animals, and the creation of Eve—all occur before God rests on the seventh day. Likewise, spiritually, the Breath of the Father descending on Jesus as a dove (Matt 3:16), Jesus entering the Jerusalem temple and naming the animals (*Hypocrites, vipers* — Matt chptr 23), and the creation of the last Eve (John 20:22) from a wound in His side—all occur before the glorified Jesus sits down at the right hand of the Father. Thus, the seventh day of the creation week foreshadows Jesus sitting down at the right hand of the Father. The seventh day of the creation week foreshadows the seventh day of a spiritual creation week when Jesus rests from bearing the sins of Israel.

The above paragraph has been written many times as have comparisons of the Genesis temptation account with the Greek philosophical temptation of the early Church, with both the first Eve and the last Eve accepting the lie of the serpent that she would not die. What hasn't previously been well addressed is the birth of Eve's first two sons: Cain and Abel.

During the [Tribulation](#), the Church as the last Eve will deliver two sons during the first half of these seven years, and a third son when the kingdom of the world becomes the

kingdom of the Most High and His Christ at the middle of these seven years of turmoil. All three sons are of promise; all have salvation available to them through having been born from above, a euphemistic expression for having received the Holy Spirit, which imparts spiritual life in the same way that physical breath imparts and sustains physical life.

But there is a difference between the sons. When God had no regard for Cain's offering, Cain became angry. God said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it" (Gen 4:6–7). No sin or lawlessness had yet been imputed to Cain even though his offering to God had been rejected. Cain, himself, had not been rejected. Rather, God tells Cain that if Cain does well, he would be accepted by God just as Abel was accepted based upon Abel bringing God the firstborn of his flock.

The firstborn of Abel's flock served as a sin offering, for sin did not lurk at his door. Spiritually, Jesus as the Passover Lamb of God serves as the sin offering for disciples—His blood, symbolically taken when drinking from the Cup at [Passover](#), is the blood of the covenant poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins (Matt 26:28).

Even though the entirety of Christendom knows that sacraments of the Bread and the Cup represent the Body and Blood of their Redeemer, the vast majority of Christians will not take these sacraments in the manner established by Jesus. Because of their unbelief, because they will not hear the words of Jesus, greater Christianity takes the sacrament however and whenever their particular sect has deemed appropriate.

Typologically, when the last Eve gives birth in the Tribulation, those Christians who take the sacraments whenever and however they choose will spiritually become Cain, whose offering was rejected but who was not himself rejected. However, because these disciples have not covered their sins with the Blood of Christ, they will be required to *do well*; they will be required to walk blameless before God, without the covering of Grace. In the Tribulation, Grace covers only those disciples whose offering for sin is accepted by God.

The concept of Grace not extending to both sons of the last Eve is addressed in the parable of the ten virgins (Matt 25:1–12), and in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matt 7:21–23, 24, 26). And this concept will be branded heresy by those who are spiritually of Cain. The concept goes against our American/Greek sense of justice.

Disciples who take the Bread and the Cup on Passover in the manner that Jesus established by example and by command (John 13:15–18; Matt 26:26–28; 1 Cor 11:23–27) will also hear Jesus' words about relaxing the least of the commandments (Matt 5:17–19). And the least of the commandments is generally recognized as the Sabbath commandment, the sign made between God and Israel as to who were, who are His people (Exod 31:3, 17).

The physical nation that left physical bondage to Pharaoh did not enter into God's rest because of unbelief (Heb 3:19) that became disobedience when the nation tried to enter the following day (compare Heb 4:6 with Num 14:41). Then realizing its mistake when condemned to death, the physical nation acknowledged its sin of unbelief: "When Moses told these words to all the people of Israel [that they were to die in the wilderness], the people mourned greatly. And they rose early in the morning and went up to the heights of the hill country, saying, 'Here we are. We will go up to the place that the Lord has promised, for we have sinned'" (Num 14:39–40). And in acknowledging its unbelief, the nation that left Egypt demonstrated its continuing unbelief by trying to enter God's rest the following day instead of setting "out for the wilderness by way of the Red Sea" (v. 25).

The spiritual nation that will be liberated from an invisible, spiritual kingdom of Babylon at the beginning of the Tribulation will not, with the exceptions of Joshua and Caleb, enter God's rest because of its unbelief. It will rebel against God (2 Thess 2:3), and will try to enter God's rest on the following day, on the eighth day instead of the seventh. And as with Cain, it will not love righteousness enough to walk blameless before God; thus, God will send a great delusion over this nation so that it cannot repent of its unbelief (*vv.* 11–12). It will be marked for death, for it will accept the mark of the beast.

And this rebelling nation will kill righteous Abel, those disciples who cover their sins with the Blood of the Lamb of God by taking the Bread and the Cup on Passover.

This is and isn't good news. Death seals disciples, and ends their physical trials and torments. And most Sabbath-keeping Christians will be killed by their Sunday-observing brothers during the first half of the Tribulation. This is the reality of Daniel 7:25, the reality of Matthew 10:21–22..

The good news that must be delivered to the world as a witness to all nations before the end comes is that the last Eve bears another son, Seth, or the other half of humanity when the Holy Spirit is poured out upon all flesh, that this third son has [only to endure to the end to be saved](#). The good news that must be proclaimed is that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13–14). The descendants of a spiritual Seth will enter God's rest, will populate Christ's Millennial reign over humanity.

All of humanity has been redeemed by the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. All of humanity has been made Israel. But we see today, and will see in the future that not all of Israel belongs to Israel.

Salvation requires crucifying the old man, who leaves bondage to sin as the circumcised nation left Egypt. Salvation is for the new creature born as a child of Israel within the tabernacle of the old man. The second covenant mediated by Moses is made with the children of the nation that left Egypt. The second covenant mediated by Christ is made with the new man born from above who dwells in the tabernacle of flesh of the crucified old man. And not all of the descendants of a spiritual Seth will take judgment upon themselves, the reality of crucifying the old man, prior to the coming of the Messiah. The ones who do not take judgment are those who will physically enter God's rest, or live as human beings on into the Millennium. The promise of salvation remains with them.

Cain would have been accepted by God if he had done well. Christians who take the sacraments however and whenever they determine that they should will be accepted by God if they do well. They are children of promise. But with very few exceptions, eight months into the Tribulation they will rebel against God by trying to enter His rest on the following day. And they will further compound their sinning by persecuting and slaying disciples represented by righteous Abel.

The American sense of justice would have the spiritual descendants of Cain, because their intentions are honorable, enter God's rest. Our American sense of justice would have this nation's prophets teaching that "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom 10:13) without mentioning that the passage pertains to those Israelites who keep the commandments of God because those commandments are neither too hard to keep, nor far from them (compare Rom 10:6–8 with Deu 30:11–14).

Our American sense of justice comes from the spiritual king of Greece, whose great horn will be broken when the Tribulation begins. This great horn will be broken because it is this

king's spiritual firstborn. And it is this firstborn king who doesn't believe that he will die, but will continue bodily on in the heaven realm. It is his unbelief that manifests itself in the theology of a bodily rapture.

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