

## Commentary — From the Margins *Amend Your Ways [2]*

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Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Oh that I had in the desert a travelers' lodging place, that I might leave my people and go away from them! For they are all adulterers, a company of treacherous men. They bend their tongue like a bow; falsehood and not truth has grown strong in the land; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know me, declares the LORD. Let everyone beware of his neighbor, and put no trust in any brother, for every brother is a deceiver, and every neighbor goes about as a slanderer. Everyone deceives his neighbor, and no one speaks the truth; they have taught their tongue to speak lies; they weary themselves committing iniquity. Heaping oppression upon oppression, and deceit upon deceit, they refuse to know me. ... I will refine them and test them, for what else can I do, because of my people? Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaks deceitfully; with his mouth each speaks peace to his neighbor, but in his heart he plans an ambush for him. Shall I not punish them for these things? And shall I not avenge myself on a nation such as this? (Jer 9:1–9)

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### 1.

The children of Israel in the Promised Land formed a shadow and copy—the left hand enantiomer—of a second nation of Israel, greater Christendom. ... It has been a while since I posted a Commentary to this website: I have been trying to keep fresh the writings on [The Philadelphia Church's](#) website as well as do those things required to sustain physical life.

Humanity hasn't improved any since last posting a Commentary. In fact, humanity has continued its long trek away from righteousness, away from God, with greater Christianity having fallen into an abyss from which it cannot, of itself, escape. For greater Christianity is the reality that casts as its shadow the ancient peoples of Israel; so what the Lord told Jeremiah about Israel and about the people of Jerusalem holds true for Christians within the greater Church—and what is it that the Lord told Jeremiah, *They bend their tongue like a bow; falsehood and not truth has grown strong in the land; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they do not know me*, the Lord.

Collectively, Christians do not know God. If they knew God, Father and Son, they would walk in this world as Christ Jesus walked (1 Cor 11:1 *et al*) ... they would do the will of God, not their own will. And the will of God, as will be seen, is for Christians to believe Christ Jesus, spurning all deceitful ways (see 2 Cor 4:2).

Under the New Covenant, there will be no need for Christian ministry; for every person will be taught by God (Isa 54:13) through having the Law [Torah] written on hearts and placed in minds so that all will know the Lord (Jer 31:31–34; Heb 8:8–12). And if the Law is written on hearts and all know the Lord, having been taught by God, what is left for Christian ministries to do, especially ministries that encourage Christians to walk in this world as righteous Gentiles, not as righteous Israelites, circumcised of heart? Where in the greater scheme of God do Christian ministries teaching disciples to live as Gentiles fit? Are these lawless Christian ministries not like those that do great works in the name of Jesus but are rejected by Christ Jesus when judgments are revealed?

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to me [Jesus], "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?" And then will I declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness." (Matt 7:15–23)

*Beware of false prophets*—this admonition holds to this day, especially in the context of doing great works in the name of Jesus but not teaching disciples to do the will of God the Father. And what is the will of the Father? Is it not to manifest love for neighbor and brother; to execute justice; to treat fairly the sojourner and stranger, the alien within your land? And is this occurring within the context of greater Christendom? ... The lapping tide of Syrian Christian refugees seeking safety in Europe argues against the brother, let alone the sojourner and stranger being treated fairly. Even when the stranger professes to believe in Christ, hearts are allegedly open but doors are closed—*there might be terrorists among them*—so the belief/faith of Christians is described by James:

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. (Jas 2:14–18)

What is the United States doing for Syrian Christian refugees? First, the United States cannot ask if the refugees are Christian for doing so would discriminate against Muslim refugees—and when the United States knows the refugees are Christians, seemingly the refugees are returned to Syrian battlefields to be murdered or enslaved ...

But is not the United States fighting ISIS by bombing civilian targets with leaflets warning them to flee, an aerial attack will soon occur? Is that not humane? Sending Syrian and Iraqi Christian refugees back into their own lands, then warning their oppressors when an attack will happen so that their oppressors can place these Christians in harms way, using them as human shields?

When James says to *show me your faith apart from your works*, he aptly describes most (not all) American Christians; for <faith> as understood in English differs from the Greek linguistic icon <*pistis*> which uses “faith” to reveal “belief”: the faith of a Christian is what the Christian believes (so far so good), but when the Christian is to believe God but lacks having the “works” indicating that the Christian truly believes God, the Christian lacks faith. In effect, the Christian drops leaflets warning the Adversary that the Christian is about to do a good deed, thereby giving the Adversary time to redirect the good deed into an act of unbelief.

There is an inherent problem seen today in Syrian Christians as was seen in the late 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Jesus Movement ... will God protect a people who profess to worship Him, but who are to Christ Jesus as the children of Israel in the days of Jeremiah were to Moses? Does calling oneself a “Christian” make the person a *Christian*? And this question has significance.

I have told the following story privately many times, but I don't know if I have placed the story in print ... I came down from Alaska in August 1991, to accept a Doctor of Arts fellowship at Idaho State University, Pocatello. After driving down from Fairbanks in four days, I arrived in Pocatello needing a place to live.

During the four days, I had only slept in the pickup until reaching Twin Falls, where I spent a night in a motel so that it would be daylight when I arrived on campus. I enrolled, then went looking for someplace to live. And not finding much in Pocatello, I started looking south of town, arriving in McCammon mid-afternoon. And I found a house with a sign, *Rent or Buy*. The place looked satisfactory. I called the phone number on the sign, returned to Pocatello, and ended up buying the place, owner financed.

I returned to McCammon just before dark and discovered that the kitchen sink didn't drain. My toolbox was in the back of my pickup; my pipe wrenches were in the tool box that was just inside the end gate for easy access while traveling. So I opened the canopy, lowered the end gate, and slid my toolbox forward, taking out the pipe wrenches ... it was very dark by the time the kitchen sink drained. I was tired. The electricity was not yet turned on in the house. But I had already put my sleeping bag in one of the bedrooms, and I crashed, not concerned about anything other than getting some sleep.

In the morning, as I walked from the kitchen to the living room, I saw the corner of my toolbox sitting open on the lowered end gate ... my heart sunk, a trite expression but there is none better that comes close to conveying my disappointment with myself for I expected someone to have helped themselves to tools and whatever else interested them in the crammed-full pickup bed.

I went outside, and everything was exactly like I had left it the previous night. Nobody had touched anything. And this was the story of living in the almost 100% LDS town for the nine years I was there.

In the fall of 2001, I was teaching a Composition class for Paducah Community College, Paducah, Kentucky. In the front row was the wife of a local Baptist pastor. Also

in the front row was the young mayor of a community just south of Paducah. And with no leadup to the question, the young mayor asked if I thought Mormons were Christians—

I was taken aback by the question. However, the question was asked as a legitimate query, not asked to provoke controversy. Apparently I was the only person the young mayor knew who'd had any dealings with Latter Day Saints. And really without thinking, I said, "Baptists don't regard Mormons as Christians, but the Apostle Paul probably wouldn't regard Baptists as Christians."

As soon as the words were out of my mouth, I knew I had work to do to justify what I had just said. So I began by relating the story of leaving the toolbox sit open all night on the end gate of my pickup, and I asked, "What would happen if I did that in Paducah?"

The class answered my question with an instantaneous and universal: *You wouldn't have a toolbox in the morning!*

"Okay ... most everybody in Paducah is Southern Baptist, is that not right?"

Heads nodded in agreement.

"So, who's the better Christian, the one who will leave an open toolbox alone, or someone who would steal tools and box?"

There was universal murmuring that a real "Christian" wouldn't steal.

"If a real Christian wouldn't steal, why wouldn't I have a toolbox if I left one open on a side street in Paducah?" And the following discussion involved ethics and putting professed ethics into practice. Nothing more was said about Latter Day Saints.

Undergirding the story of leaving the toolbox open all night is the implied question, how can a person profess that Christ Jesus is the person's Lord and the person not strive to walk in this world as Jesus walked?

In January 2002, I was called—in an audible call heard in my mind in words that seemed to be "things"—to reread prophecy. I wasn't called to pass judgment on professed servants of Christ Jesus; I was called to put linguistic signifieds to the prophetic signifiers found in Scripture. And I know I wasn't called because of my righteousness, but because I could and because I would reread prophecy. I idolized no person, nor any text. I believed God, and by this time, I had a thirty year track record of, when no person was looking, obeying God, not perfectly but willingly.

So back to implied question of why would a person profess that Jesus is the person's Lord but then not strive to walk in this world as Jesus walked ... Jesus didn't walk in this world as a Gentile, but as an observant Jew—

Was Jesus a Gentile who sacrificed the thighs bones of bulls to Zeus? Of course He wasn't. Again, He was an observant Jew that kept the Commandments; that kept the Sabbath Commandment through being the Lord of the Sabbath. Jesus was the reality of the manna that ancient Israel ate in the wilderness ... for six days Israel and the children of Israel gathered manna, but the seventh day was the Sabbath and there was no manna. Why? Because Christ Jesus is the true bread of life, given on the Sabbath, thereby spiritually feeding Israel on the Sabbath as manna physically fed Israel.

Before preceding let us see this in Scripture:

So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him,

"Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on Him God the Father has set His seal." Then they said to Him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "***This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.***" So they said to Him, "Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, *it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.*" They said to Him, "Sir, give us this bread always." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But *I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent me. And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life*, and I will raise Him up on the last day." (John 6:24–40 emphasis and double emphasis added)

The physical forms the mirror image, the reversed image, of the spiritual; thus, physical manna given for six days forms the mirror image of spiritual bread, true bread [the staff of life], not given for six days of a seven day week, but given on one day, the Sabbath ...

The will of the Father is the work of God, that disciples believe the Son; that disciples believe that Jesus is the "bread" of God, that Jesus is the light and life of this world.

Now, tending an applicable practical matter: will you, as a believing disciple, feel hunger pains in your belly ever again in your life? Jesus said, *I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger*. I have Sabbatarian pastors in Kenya write me and say they are hungry, truly hungry, that they have nothing to eat but go to bed after Sabbath services because there is no food for either they or their families. They have no energy. They sleep physically while their fleshly bodies devour themselves. So how is it that Jesus can tell the crowd that chased after Him, *Whoever comes to me shall not hunger* and yet in virtually the same breath tell the crowd, *You have seen me and yet do not believe ...*

How important is believing God? Believing Christ Jesus? Is this not the work and will of God? Again, it is. So what does it mean to "believe" Christ?

As a believer, if your belly grumbles because you have had no food to eat, will you continue to believe Christ that *whoever comes to Christ shall not hunger*? Or will you begin to disbelieve?

Peter writes,

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be again born [*'anagennao*] to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Pet 1:3–5)

Now if a Christian pastor comes along and tells you not to believe Peter who told you that as a disciple, you have already been born again; if this Christian pastor tells you that you are not really born anew because your fleshly body still bleeds — if a Christian pastor tells you that just because you heard the word of Jesus and believed the One who sent Him into this world, you really haven't passed from death to life without coming under judgment (John 5:24), will you believe the pastor? What if this pastor was a pioneering advertising innovator, well able to sell soap to the filthy, and waterless cookware to the hungry, would you be more or less inclined to believe him?

Or would you believe John's Jesus and Peter writing as himself, neither of whom you have met in person?

If you as a Christian are able to believe that Jesus is the true bread of life that has come down from heaven, and that if you come to Jesus you will never again hunger even though you "know" you have to eat physical food to sustain the fleshly body, are you not also able to understand that being again-born doesn't pertain to the fleshly body but to the inner self that "never hungers" after having come to Christ Jesus?

When the young mayor asked if I thought Mormons were Christians, I wanted to steer the class away from a discussion of Latter Day Saint theology, which I don't believe and don't support in any way, and I wanted to get to the problem Jeremiah addressed when it came to Jerusalem and the people of the house of Judah, the problem of behavior; the problem of false prophets falsely teaching Christians to not believe God.

The strength of the Mormon Church is that their members "believe" their dogmas, doctrines, and covenants—and through belief of Latter Day Arian Christian doctrines, Mormons tend to live their religion, thereby producing physically good children and adults. But I suspect that would also be true of Syrian Christian refugees.

You, as a Christian, have a choice that is ever before you: believe those who lived in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century; or believe Popes, Bishops, and pastors from the 2<sup>nd</sup>-Century through the 20<sup>th</sup>-Century? Whom will you believe? And you have to know, because your stomach still grumbles when you haven't eaten, that what Jesus told the crowd about coming to Him and not being hungry pertains spiritually or metaphorically, not physically. You have to know everything Jesus said to His disciples He said in figures of speech (John 16:25), that nothing He said should be taken literally? You can, can't you, recognize a metaphor, where something is said to be something it is not?

To be again-born [*'anagennao*] has nothing to do with returning to the womb to again be born of water. To be again-born has nothing to do with the fleshly body at all; for the fleshly body is perishable, and that which is perishable [that which is of the flesh] will not inherit immortality (1 Cor 15:50).

When Jonah was in the whale as a symbol of the inner self being raised to life inside a gigantic fleshly body, Jonah had no control over the whale ... the inner self, when initially raised to life, has no control of the person's fleshly body; hence, Paul wrote,

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 7:9–23 emphasis added)

Did Paul actually die when the Commandments came to him? No, not literally. He died spiritually (but he was inwardly already dead); he died figuratively ... he became aware that inwardly, he had no life. Plus, he became aware that he couldn't make his fleshly body do what he wanted it to do. For he wanted to keep the Law, but his fleshly body didn't keep the Law but rather, continually broke it.

Paul's inner self was to his fleshly body as Jonah was to the whale—and as Jonah couldn't make the whale go left or right, Paul's inner self couldn't make his fleshly body keep the Commandments—and this he didn't understand other than to say that there was a different law ruling over his fleshly body than ruled over his thoughts.

So back to the question, can you believe Jesus when you eyes and your belly argue against belief? Can you accept Jesus as true bread from heaven, gathered on the Sabbath day to sustain not the fleshly body but the living inner self, with Christ “gathered on the Sabbath” lasting for six days until gathered again on the Sabbath, with Christ being the mirror-image of manna.

The problem of belief goes back to ancient Israel being the shadow and copy of a second nation of Israel, the greater Christian Church; goes back to manna being the shadow and copy of Christ Jesus as spiritual bread; goes back to ancient Israel in houses in Egypt representing the resurrected inner self that is neither male nor female dwelling in fleshly houses as Jonah was resurrected to life inside the whale:

Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, saying,  
"I called out to the LORD, out of my distress, and He answered me; *out of*

*the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice. For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me. Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.' The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God. When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple. (Jon 2:1–7 emphasis added)*

But analogies, like symbols, like metaphors, are only true for a while ...

Do I believe Syrian Christians are truly “Christian,” persecuted by Muslim civil authorities because of belief in Christ Jesus? Do I believe Roman Catholics are truly Christians? Do I believe Southern Baptists are truly Christians? Do I believe Latter Day Saints are truly Christians? ... It really doesn't matter what I believe about a person who publicly professes that Jesus is Lord and believes in the person's heart that the Father raised Jesus from death; for God will fill every person who professes that Jesus is Lord with spirit at the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel.

The movement of Syrian Christians into Europe is a substantial migration of peoples, comparable with the Goths, an East Germanic people, leaving Scandinavia and migrating to Gothiscanda (modern Pomerania) along the south coast of the Black Sea, in the first centuries of the modern historical era. ... The Goths were of two branches, the Visigoths, federates of Rome, and the Ostrogoths, temporarily allied with Huns: Rome was sacked by Arian Christian Goths, sacked again, and sacked one more. From the perspective of the Rome Church, Arian Christians were barbarians, especially when these Christians were Goths.

In his ministry, Herbert W. Armstrong taught a two house of Israel doctrine that had both houses of Israel being physical peoples, one house being that of Judah and Jerusalem, the other house being that of Israel and the ten so-called lost tribes of Israel that were never really lost, only losing only their identity as “Israel” through having neglected continued Sabbath observance.

Armstrong was never able to get past what various denominations “taught” about Christ Jesus and get to how the people in these denominations lived their lives: was their faith seen through their works? Obviously, no Sunday keeping Christian believes Moses, nor walks in this world as Jesus walked. But otherwise, do these “Christians” feed the hungry, give shelter to the homeless, clothe the naked—and in many cases the answer is a resounding, Yes!

Now looking within the Sabbatarian churches of God, do these Christians feed the hungry? No. Is their belief of God manifested in their works? Yes. And that's the problem ... when your belief of God is limited to correct dogmas and doctrines, you have no love for God. You have eaten the leavening of Pharisees and Sadducees, who placed “correct doctrines” over manifested love for neighbor and brother. And this was the primary fault of the ministry of Herbert Armstrong, who didn't even get his dogmas correct for God is not a racist; Armstrong was.



Any person who places emphasis on what is physical will inevitably favor one physical thing over another. The “thing” could be skin color, could be biological gender, could be the sound of an utterance, could be the trappings of wealth. But favoring one thing over another is *prima facie* evidence that the person is carnal and does not have the mind of Christ; does not have the spirit of God; is not born of spirit.

Any person who places importance on physical things will eventually succumb to idolatry, and begin to worship the creation rather than the Creator, the Beloved of God. And once the person succumbs to idolatry, it is downhill from there to where the children of Israel were in the Promised Land ... no person will be able to leave lawn furniture out overnight, as is allegedly now the case in Britain.

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