

APA- Volume Four

Introduction to Volume Four

Rhetorical-judicial categories predominate in the conception of human beings, which was definitive for the heroes of Sophistic novels, ancient biography and autobiography and later in chivalric romances, novels of trial and analogous rhetorical genres. The unity of a man and the coherence of his acts (his deeds) are of a rhetorical and legal character and therefore, viewed from a later psychological concept of the human personality, they appear external and merely formal. It is no accident that the Sophistic novel was born out of a utopian fantasy of the law having nothing to do with the actual legal and political life of rhetoricians. (M.M. Bakhtin. "Discourse in the Novel." *The Dialogic Imagination*. Ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin; University of Texas Press, 1981. 407)

1.

The Law has nothing to do with salvation, according to what the Paul of Acts told the Philippian jailer: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household" (Acts 16:31) ... belief or faith in Christ Jesus was all the jailer needed. No "doing" was involved in salvation. Thus according to this *Paul*, everyone everywhere who just believed in Jesus would be saved, the message of Evangelical Christendom; the essence of the *Sinner's Prayer*. But what this *Paul* said is rooted in the utopian fantasy of a novelist in 1st-Century Ephesus or Smyrna, two of the three centers of the Second Sophists. What this *Paul* said parodies what Jesus said in Matthew's Gospel about the one who shall be saved feeding the hungry and giving shelter to the homeless; parodies what Paul-of-his-epistles said about doers of the Law shall be justified, not hearers only; parodies what James-of-his-epistle said about a person is justified by works and not by faith alone; parodies what Peter-of-his-epistles said about the lambs of God shall be holy in all their conduct; parodies what John wrote about whoever transgresses the Law is of the devil, that no one born of God makes a practice of transgressing the Law. And acceptance by greater Christendom of this parody of the good news of Christ Jesus (i.e., Acts) would be amusing if so many Christians—not just lawless Evangelicals and Appalachian snake handlers—had not committed their lives to doctrines originating in a Sophist novel.

In the Affliction (the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years of tribulation), Sabbatarian Christians, especially, will commit to communal living after the model seen in Acts 2:42–47 ... what happens when all possessions have been sold (if the Sabbatarian is even permitted to engage in transactions), or when there is no one to buy possessions offered for sale? What will then be distributed to those who have need? Will the

community of Believers survive when there are many hungry mouths to feed in one location, not a few?

During the drought of King Ahab's day, were all seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal gathered together in or near the widow of Zarephath's home? Or was only Elijah in her upper room? Would not even a second person in her home have caused neighbors to betray the location of Elijah when Ahab searched the world for him?

When many Sabbatarians have gathered together in a few locations in the Affliction—and because of what is written in Acts, many will gather in communities in which all things are shared—will these Sabbatarians not be easy prey for human predators? Or worse, will these communities turn inward and prey upon themselves?

As Laocoön's warning in Virgil's *Aeneid*—"Do not trust the Horse, Trojans / Whatever it is, I fear the Greeks even bearing gifts"—was ignored by the men of Troy, especially after Laocoön in anger hurled his spear at the Horse and he and his sons were then publicly strangled by sea serpents (the monumental marble sculpture of Laocoön and his sons being strangled, attributed by Pliny the Elder to three sculptors from Rhodes, resides in the Vatican Museums, an appropriate location), my words, my warning that Acts is a novel will be ignored by Sabbatarian Christians that must make themselves into easy prey for their persecutors who will kill those slated for martyrdom as their fellow servants were killed in the 1st-Century, with those to be martyred making their second journey of faith into martyrdom because they refused, once coming to the knowledge of the Sabbath, to make any other additional journey of faith. They refused to heed warning words wafting in the thin silence of the ephemeral web, words that could have been heard anywhere in the world.

When every Christian is filled-with and empowered by the divine breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] at the Second Passover liberation of Israel, some of these Christians will be as Cain was. Some will deliver the faithful to death. Some will fall away and betray one another (betray entire communities). False prophets will arise and lead many astray. Lawlessness will increase and the love of many grow cold. Why? Because warnings were ignored. Belief perished. The gift of a Second Sophist was trusted.

When the Sabbatarian Christian is as a candle on a hill, there are not many Sabbatarians gathered together ... if there were, their light could be likened to a bonfire, not a candle or a lamp (i.e., the gathering together of two or three). Thus, the analogy Jesus used to describe His disciples preclude communities of Believers such as seen among the Hutterites, who attempt to apply Acts 4:32 — "Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common."

Establishing communities in the Affliction that live together and pray together and share everything in common is a utopian fantasy; for where the Body is, there the eagles will gather to feed. The Sabbatarian Christian who shall live through the Affliction is the one that attracts no attention. The Christian that will be numbered in the Remnant (Rev 12:17) will keep the commandments and have the spirit of prophecy and will not have been so presumptuous as to teach or preach during the ministry of the two witnesses. This Christian will have kept a very low profile throughout the Affliction so that Christ Jesus can elevate this Christian to the status Aaron had in the wilderness once the single kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man halfway through the seven endtime

years (the 2520 days of the combined Affliction and Endurance). If a Sabbatarian Christian seeks to establish his or her own ministry during the days of the two witnesses, this Sabbatarian will perish physically in the Affliction, thereby losing the opportunity to be elevated by Christ.

By the end of the Affliction, Christ will speak with one voice, not with the many voices that are today heard within greater Christendom. But of perhaps more importance today, every Sabbatarian not of the 144,000 natural Jews (what will remain of the Woman), or not of the Remnant of the offspring of the Woman will have been silenced by death. Thus, without the heteroglossia of denominationalism, inclusion of a novel in Holy Writ will not again be possible, meaning that there were already many voices heard within the late 1st-Century Christian community as well as in all of Hellenism when Acts was written. There were certainly many voices heard within the so-called Christian community in the 2nd-Century, when even the voice of the dead Body of Christ could still be heard.

Because every Christian will be filled with spirit, with the Law written on hearts and placed in minds at the Second Passover liberation of Israel, every Christian in the Affliction will want to do a work for God—the Christian cannot help wanting to do a work—but the 1260 days of the Affliction represents the ministry of the two witnesses. Any other ministry attempted will be in competition to the ministry of the two who are empowered by Christ Jesus to shut skies and call plagues and kill with their mouths those who would harm them. Every other ministry will be presumptuous or openly false: it will be from the presumptuous that “many false prophets will arise” (Matt 24:11). Thus, even the Sabbatarian who thinks that he or she knows Scripture well enough to teach others when there is no authority to teach will perish; every ministry other than that of the two witnesses will have perished, including that of the man of perdition and false prophet, when these two are publicly raised from death.

The two witnesses are the *two sons of new oil*—

The “statuary” that will be remembered in the Millennium will not be carved in marble, lifeless stone, but from human flesh and will be that of Jesus and the two younger sons of God, the two witnesses, the three whom Apollyon could not devour (i.e., kill and keep dead). And this living threesome will not be kept in the Vatican but in New Jerusalem, the city of God. The living “group” these three represent are as real as their mirror image, Laocoön and his sons, are fictional ... it would seem that *the Laocoön group* was an anticipation of “the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth” (Zech 4:14), one to either side of Christ Jesus—the threesome that died but lived again not as cold stone by as living spirit before it was time to dedicate the temple of God in the resurrection of firstfruits.

As the living Jesus who was from heaven returned to heaven after His resurrection, the living two sons of new oil who are of this earth shall remain on this earth when resurrected from death throughout the Endurance of Jesus, the last 1260 days of the seven endtime years. They must *endure* their delayed ascension to the Father as Christ Jesus has endured the delayed resurrection of His Body from death.

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The canonized book, “The Acts of the Apostles,” a Sophist novel, a Trojan horse, has been used to establish dogmas and practices in the Christian Church, especially by

Protestant Reformers and the Radical Reformers since the early 16th-Century CE, with Anabaptist “love feasts” being poor imitations of the commanded observance of the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost); with love feasts having no precedent in Scripture outside of Acts.

Sophist novels are about trials in which the fidelity and love of hero and heroine are tested repeatedly through imprisonment and threatened loss of life by civil authorities and by nature; hence nearly obligatory trial and shipwreck scenes are in every novel, these scenes serving to parody epics, such as Homer’s *The Odyssey* in which Odysseus was condemned without trial by Poseidon for having blinded the godlike Polyphemus who towered over all the Cyclops’ clans. But when Poseidon was away, accepting the worship of Ethiopians, the daughter of Atlas, the beautiful nymph Calypso who had offered Odysseus immortality if he would be her husband, was compelled to release him and send Odysseus on his way. But when Odysseus was in sight of Phaeacia’s shores where he was “fated to escape his noose of pain” (*Odyssey* 5.318), he was shipwrecked by Poseidon.

Consider the cause of Odysseus’ hardships, the blinding of Polyphemus, the “many [poly] sayings [phemus]” represented by one round eye, gigantic in size, with *The Odyssey* as an epic attempting to silence the many voices that vied to be heard among the Greeks in the 7th and 8th Centuries BCE, and effectively doing so throughout Classicism.

In Lit survey classes, I have taught *The Odyssey* several times—and inevitably I ask the question, what is wrong with Odysseus? He is offered the love of a beautiful goddess on an island of plenty; he is offered immortality (being made into a god himself). The wife of his youth is now twenty years older. And if he returns to Ithaca, he will have to till rocky soil to eke out a living. Although his wife and son haven’t given up hope of his return, most everyone considers him lost at sea ... he is the age when midlife crises occur and men take trophy wives for themselves. Yet he is the hero of an epic; so this man of twists and turns is beyond temptation, beyond testing except rhetorically to determine his identity. His love for Penelope is beyond doubt: he is fated to return to her. So the end of the epic is known from its beginning, only Homer doesn’t end *The Odyssey* where lesser tellers of tales end theirs, but would send Odysseus away from home to begin a new, untold story, a story for which no narrative energy remained (Odysseus was to journey inland to where an oar was not recognized as an oar—Homer inserts tension in the epic’s dénouement by not telling the promised resolution).

When the end of an epic is known from its beginning, the audience listens to the telling of a familiar story to ascertain the rhetorical quality of the telling, not to learn a new thing or “feel” suspense or drama; not to be titillated by unique twists and turns that produce a new resolution of the affair. There will be the same resolution in every telling. What will be new is the language used to get from the familiar beginning to the known end, with a powerful telling erasing every previous telling of the story so that a single voice is heard when the epic is told, with the voice of the next teller of the epic being pitted against the determining standard, with but one of these two voices surviving.

When the end is known from the beginning, the focus of the narrative is not what happens (that is already known) but on the “word,” the language used; thus making epic as poetry is—and usually having epic written as poetry for this reason.

Theology would choose to be as epic was, single-voiced, with the voice of Christ Jesus heard in the words of a definitive explication of Holy Writ. But denominalization

has produced many voices, each clambering to be heard, all declaring themselves true, with Christians not knowing for certain which voice should be believed or if any of them should be believed; thus, Christians believe everything and nothing at the same time. They provide the necessary heteroglossia for the novelization of Hebraic Scripture, thereby ignoring the demand for single-voiced discourse inherent to inscribed Semitic languages.

“The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-lipped sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit” (Heb 4:12), but it is only double-voiced in Greek (the language in which Hebrews was written), not in Hebrew or Aramaic. Thus, it was impossible for the Jew to hear in Jesus’ words the utterances of God the Father; the Hebrew or Aramaic speaking Jew heard only Jesus’ voice in His words.

Pause and consider familiar words as written in Hebrew, which cannot be reproduced by the e-book software presently available to me; so to verify what I write, since many Christians have a copy of Strong’s Concordance, check Hebrew word numbers 7999 through 8011 ... when no vowel pointing is included as would have been the case when Moses wrote, the primary three consonant root [*shiyin-lamed-mem*] can become “*shalam*” (be safe), or “*shelem*” (thanks), or “*Shalem*” (Salem, for Jerusalem), or “*shalom*” (health, prosperity, peace); but when the semi-consonant *hay* is added to the three consonant root [*shiyin-lamed-mem-hay*], we will get “*salmah*” (raiment), or “*Salmah*” (Salmon), or “*Sh^elomoh*” (Solomon), which would have King Solomon representing the garment of peace, with Jerusalem being the city of peace, prosperity, health. Thus to read the Hebrew text that Moses wrote, the readers would have to know which vowel sounds to add between consonants of the three consonant root. And to know which vowels to add, instruction would have needed to be given from one reader to the next from the days of Moses to the present. Therefore, the authority of the instructor, reaching back to Moses, would have produced a single-voiced reading in a way analogous to how Greek epic and poetry was single-voiced discourse once Odysseus blinded Polyphemus.

The Sophist novel was written against the backdrop of Greek epic and written in competition to epic discourse that was also characteristic of Greek drama; for the novel incorporating into the novel the many voices that each sought to be heard and were heard and echoed against each other in unpatterned and unpredictable ways in 1st-Century Asia Minor, with Christianity being another voice, a loud voice that demanded to be heard once Paul took the good news of Christ Jesus to the Greeks, making converts in Ephesus and Smyrna. The Second Sophists returned sight to Polyphemus, who then in turn devoured the epic.

Bakhtin wrote,

The idea of testing the hero, of testing his discourse, may very well be the most fundamental organizing idea in the novel, one that radically distinguishes it from epic. From the very beginning the epic hero has stood on the other side of trial; in the epic world, an atmosphere of doubt surrounding the hero’s heroism is unthinkable. (“Discourse” 388)

Odysseus excelled all men in wisdom—the Trojan horse was his idea—and excelled other men in offerings to the gods (*Odyssey* 1.79). He was to experience hardships because of the gods’ pettiness, not because he needed to be tested. Thus with rhetoric he tested others and was in turned recognized by his rhetoric; his hardships were not to test

him as other men were tested but to confirm what was already known about him, that he was unbelievably tricky, which Greeks perceived as the manifestation of wisdom.

The writer of Acts approaches Homer's Odysseus in being tricky; for this writer sneaked a Trojan horse into Scripture, a Trojan virus into canonical texts, a virus that will condemn millions of endtime Christians to the lake of fire if not detected and flushed out before the Second Passover liberation of Israel.

When deceitfulness is considered wisdom as Greeks understood *wisdom*, then the highest compliment a pagan Sophist could pay to Christianity would be to sneak a figurative Trojan horse into Christian texts; for the walls of Christian argument could not be breached by frontal assault as the walls of Troy withstood ten years of Greek assault. But when the Greeks faked withdrawal from the shores of Troy, leaving behind a large wood horse, the creation of Odysseus, the men of Troy opened the gates to the city and drew the horse inside; for the men of Troy were men of the plains who held the horse in great esteem (as Christians hold Paul in great esteem) despite Laocoön warning his fellow Trojans against the gift of Greeks. But Laocoön was silenced by Poseidon, who in turn (in the polyglossia of Asia Minor) was silenced by Jesus walking on the water in a storm.

Once inside the walls of Troy, with the men of Troy drunk from celebrating their victory ten years in the making, Odysseus and the men with him inside the horse let themselves down, opened the gates to the city, and began the rout that would leave Greeks victorious, having stolen a victory that could not be won in frontal assaults.

The author of Acts, presumed to be Luke, was intelligent, knowing enough not to include in his Gospel an account of Jesus walking on water, an account that Matthew, Mark, and John include in their Gospels ... as endtime disciples, it is impossible to recover the heteroglossia of 1st-Century Asia Minor. At best we can crudely approximate these many dialectal voices, questioning why one scenario is included in the biographies and another scenario omitted, deconstructing the texts wherever a lacunae can be found, asking why Matthew and John includes an account found in Mark, perhaps the first of the Gospels to be written, but Luke omits this account. Surely Luke knew the story. But a Second Sophist would also know the story of Laocoön, and this novelist while not fearing the wrath of Poseidon would not have wanted to invoke any imagery that would have caused a reader to reject Acts until the story was compelling enough that greater Christendom would drag it inside the walls of accepted texts.

Once Acts was inside the walls of Jerusalem above and no one paying attention to a warning voice, the victory belonged to Greeks, whose paganism has reigned over greater Christendom since the writings of this mysterious "Luke" entered into canonical New Testament texts. God the Father held this Trojan horse in *check* by bringing death onto the Body of Christ. His figurative virus protection quarantined this Trojan until time to kill it just before life is returned to the temple. And it has become that time; for consider the irony of Father and Son having called to a specific task, that of rereading prophecy, one bearing both the name of the creator of Odysseus and the name of the one to whom the *Paul* of Acts appeals for judgment: the beginning and the end of the Trojan.

Acts is utopian fantasy writing, a Trojan horse that Christendom has wanted to believe and has accepted as true without challenging this text that was left outside the gates of New Jerusalem. ... Odysseus and his men would have perished if the wood horse

had been burned outside the walls of the city, but the men of Troy thought the Greeks had paid homage to their gods in building the horse—and so Christians are now, warned but this warning silenced by disbelief, and have been since finding an easily believed 1st-Century novel in which Paul is the hero.

2.

In Sophist novels, much happens to the hero who emerges from each trial unchanged although the possibility exists (unlike in epics) that he [she] could fail for the outcome of a course of affairs is not fully fated. Hence, the Paul of Acts tells the elders of the church at Ephesus, “I am going to Jerusalem ... not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me” (Acts 20:22–23).

If this Paul of Acts knew that imprisonment awaited him in Jerusalem, why go there? Why tempt fate? Is this tempting of fate not comparable to the Adversary taking Christ Jesus to the holy city and to the pinnacle of the temple, and saying to Him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down” (Matt 4:6)?

Jesus’ response differed from Paul’s: “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test” (v. 7).

Paul of Acts tests the Lord by going to Jerusalem when he has no good reason for going—

The Paul of Acts, by his own testimony, knew that imprisonment and afflictions awaited him in Jerusalem; thus this Paul, by going to Jerusalem, parodies Jesus, actually mocks Jesus who would not tempt God—and this novelist knew what he was writing for by his testimony, he had examined the writings of others, eyewitnesses and ministers of the word (Luke 1:1–4).

But a Sophist novel does not seek to explain or understand why its hero does whatever is done; doesn’t seek to explain why Paul would voluntarily go to where he knew he would be imprisoned, thus leaving Paul’s motivation open to speculation. And without the missing heteroglossia that would have rhetorically fleshed out a Sophist novel in the 1st-Century CE, an endtime disciple is left to guess at what was in this Paul’s mind, who tells the elders, “I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again” (Acts 20:25). The question is, why would this Paul then add, “I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you” (v. 26)?

The only way for the author of Acts to be innocent of the blood of Christians who have staked their lives to those things that are in Acts, such as Gentile converts needing only to abstain from things polluted by idols, sexual immorality, strangled meats, and blood, is for this author to be exposed as a fiction writer before life is returned to the temple. The only way for a Trojan not to do its intended harm is for the Trojan to be detected, identified, quarantined, and killed before those Greeks bearing gifts can breach defense walls from within.

Was the Paul of Acts telling the elders of Ephesus that they would all be killed, martyred? Or was the author of Acts speaking as a character through this Paul to all Christians, a possibility suggesting that the *lover of God* to whom Acts was written was him or herself imprisoned, but by doubts rather than by bars of iron?

Because the hero of a Sophist novel journeys from place to place for no truly good reason, encountering new tests in a new location that are the same tests as if the events of the day occur without passage of time, the hero is inevitably a talkative sort who tests his rhetoric, his discourse, against all other possible discourses. In Acts, this testing of rhetoric is seen in Paul conversing with the Apostles at the Jerusalem Conference, with Lycaonians, with the Philippian jailer, with Epicurean and Stoic philosophers in Athens (Acts 17:18); then in Jerusalem and on the temple steps in Hebrew, Paul told his story to angry Jews and then to chief priests and all the council, and finally to Felix, Festus, and King Agrippa. And in each case (as well in speeches in-between) Paul tested not his physical strength nor his faith but his rhetoric against the polyglossia of Asia Minor and heteroglossia of Judaism.

The Book of Acts is a well crafted Sophist novel that is unmistakably a fictionalization of probable real events, exaggerated to satisfy the stylization of novelesque prose, thereby giving to Acts an *over the top* feel about the narrative ... why didn't I recognize that Acts was a novel years ago? Good question, answered by simply saying I didn't expect to find a novel between the covers of my Bible. I didn't expect to find fiction in canonized texts. I suspended my disbelief for long enough to have helped pull a Trojan horse inside the city walls of New Jerusalem. Besides, citations from Acts proved helpful to arguments I was trying to make, serving as a third or fourth witnesses to premises that really didn't need the additional support.

I differ from none of the Elect except I was called to do a specific work, and named a generation earlier. So I was trusting, but trusting according to the dynamics of my generation: *Trust but Verify*. And when verifying that what I was told was so, I found Christendom riddled with lies and liars. I also found that God was true, faithful, more real than I am. I found that when I read Scripture for myself—that when I reread prophecy—I joined myself to the first disciples so that I looked at the backside of greater Christianity, not at its smiling face.

It was only when challenged to explain apparent discrepancies in the Synoptic Gospels that I stepped back and looked at all of the Gospels, knowing that I habitually took citations from Matthew's and John's Gospels and seldom cited Mark's or Luke's Gospel. And I noticed that Luke's Gospel had about it a differing "feel," a tone difference, a different accentuation, which for prose can be likened to the accentuation of individual words ... for English words, when emphasis (stress) is moved from the first syllable of a two-syllable word to the second syllable when the word is formed into a three-syllable variant, the phonemes of the first and second syllables change (e.g., /har~s/ versus /h~ras'ment/). This movement of stress produces a "sound difference" without changing the meaning of the word. Likewise, when a narrative is re-accentuated, there is a different feel to the narrative without a discernable change in the meanings of its words. This different feel actually produces a different text, with this textual *difference* being difficult to verbalize (express in reasoned prose). Thus, writers (more so than critics) tend to accept criticism of their work on the grounds that a piece of writing just doesn't *feel* right.

When Matthew's Gospel is re-accentuated, the text moves from a physical emphasis to a spiritual emphasis, with Matthew's genealogy of Jesus being a prime example:

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon [Heb: *siyn-lamed-mem-hay*], and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon [*shiyn-lamed-mem-hay*] by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph ... (Matt 1:1–7)

But Luke's genealogy has Joseph, Jesus' legal father, descending from David through Nathan his son (Luke 3:31).

Although the former Worldwide Church of God used to say that Matthew's genealogy was of Joseph while Luke's genealogy was of Mary, this is not what Luke claims: "Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli" (Luke 3:23).

In the re-accentuation of Matthew's Gospel, Christ Jesus is the spiritual son of David, not his biological son, at least not through Solomon ... Jesus was born to be a king, or so He claimed: "Then Pilate said to him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.'" (John 18:37)

Since Jesus was not the biological son of Joseph, husband of Mary, but since His claim is that He was born to be a king, it makes spiritual sense (not carnal sense) for Matthew to give to Jesus the genealogy of the kings of Israel, the nation diminished from all of Israel to the House of Judah then to the city of Jerusalem at the time of the deportation to Babylon, and finally to the temple mount when a remnant returns to Jerusalem to build for Cyrus a house for the God of heaven there.

The author of Hebrews writes,

For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed of him, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." (Heb 7:12–17)

Melchizedek was the king of Salem [*shiyn-lamed-mem*]; thus, if Jesus were a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, king of Salem (Gen 14:18), then Jesus would be spiritually descended from David through Solomon [*shiyn-lamed-mem-hay*], not Nathan, for again, Joseph (husband of Mary) was not Jesus' father. And the re-accentuation of the beginning genealogy in Matthew's Gospel gives to this biography a differing "feel" from that of Luke's Gospel ...

Aspects of Luke's Gospel just didn't *feel* right when I began to examine the biography more closely than I had ever before—and when moving from Luke's Gospel to Acts, the second narrative by apparently the same writer, I realized Acts was not history but a double-voiced novel that had all but lost its multiple voicing. It had become single-voiced history, but false history. Thus, to return Acts to its status as a novel, additional voicing had to be added, that voicing begins with my voice, to which the voices of the Apostles and Prophets were added in the last section of Volume Three, Chapter Seven.

Without being doubled-voiced, a novel is not a novel—and the Word of God would be merely dead rhetoric. But the living Word of God is double-lipped, double voiced (Heb 4:12).

Again, I was called to reread prophecy, but before being called to this work, through a set of circumstances beyond what is "usual," I entered University of Alaska Fairbanks' graduate writing program without an undergraduate degree or any undergraduate English coursework beyond the Freshman Composition sequence. And my first semester on campus, I was exposed to Bakhtin's work on the carnivalesque from a professor newly arrived from University of Texas Austin. What I didn't know then was that initial exposure to Bakhtin's theory of the novel would give me the background I needed to recognize Acts for what it is a quarter of a century later.

When so much of what Christian orthodoxy believes as factual is taken from a novel that is at best fictionalized history, Christian orthodoxy has no great claim to truth. Its righteousness only exists in an externalized form, and when most of Christendom flees from the commandments of God, treating these commandments as if they were viruses, Christian orthodoxy has set itself up for a quick death in the lake of fire.

But Christian orthodoxy already stands condemned before Father and Son for claiming to be able to see when its is blind. It is actually a second orthodoxy, one of American origins that is about to come full circle, that still needs addressed and will be in a later chapter of this Volume Four.

When Christians take so much of what is believed from a novel, the Baptist, the Methodist, the Adventist, the Catholic have done what Latter Day Saints do and have done in taking their doctrines from a work of human imagination, The Book of Mormon. Both the orthodox Christian and the Latter Day Saint will be judged by the exteriorization of their inner selves through their practice of love toward God, neighbor, and brother. Both will be judged by their works that reveal their faith; for neither have greater claim to possessing the truth than the other. And from experience I have found that greater externalized righteousness exists in Latter Day Saint communities than exists among Trinitarian Christians.

At the end of Volume Three, the Apostle Paul was found innocent of the fabrications brought against him in Acts: he was not the man who shook a venomous snake off into the fire, but was a man like myself, a man guilty only of preaching the disruptive message that with the giving of the spirit, Israel had become a people circumcised of heart. Circumcision of foreskins will not matter until Christ Jesus returns as the Messiah and the Third Temple is constructed; for circumcision of the heart is needed to enter the spiritual sanctuary of the temple, and circumcision of the flesh is needed to enter the physical sanctuary of the temple. And when the Christian Church is the temple of God (1

Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16), no physical sanctuary exists or can exist until those Christians who are to be glorified receive what has been promised to them.

When the physical things of this world reveal and precede the spiritual things of God (Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 15:46), and when the people of Israel as captives dispersed by the kings of Assyria and Babylon into lands that would be ruled by the kings of Media and Persia form the shadow and copy of endtime Christians in mental captivity to the prince of this world and his silvery henchmen—with the ancient house of Israel representing Arian Christendom (one-godders) and the ancient house of Judah representing Trinitarian Christendom—the permanency of the inscribed word of the king of Persia forms the shadow and type of the primacy and permanency of the utterances of God, Son and Father, through the endtime two witnesses who will speak in their name, being the signet of their authority. And this will have the two witnesses being neither Arian nor Trinitarian, but having authority over both via the permanency of their inscribed words.

Latter Day Saints are neo-Arians ...

This is a story I have told before: when I first came down from Alaska in August 1991, to accept a Doctor of Arts fellowship from Idaho State University, Pocatello, I purchased an older house in McCammon, a town of 700 that with surrounding ranches was able to support three wards (LDS congregations) of about 300 members each. I brought a heavily loaded canopied pickup down from Alaska, with my toolbox being accessible from the back of the load; so when I encountered plumbing problems in the house on the day I bought it, I dropped the tailgate, pulled my toolbox forward so I could get at the pipe wrenches behind it and worked until dark to get drains flowing (the electricity wasn't yet turned on), and tired, mind-numb from having driven four days virtually without sleep, I rolled out my sleeping bag in the dark and crashed on the bedroom floor.

When I woke at dawn, I staggered into the living room where, through the curtainless picture window I saw my toolbox sitting on the open tailgate, and my heart sunk. I wondered how I could be so stupid to leave that much temptation sitting in the open ... but nothing was touched. My toolbox—and the rest of the load, including several rifles—were exactly as I had left everything at dark.

When teaching a Composition class at Paducah Community College, Paducah, Kentucky, I was once asked, with no context justifying the question, if I thought Mormons were Christians. Being taken by surprise and with the wife of a Baptist pastor in the front row, I said, “Baptists don't regard Mormons as Christians but then the Apostle Paul wouldn't regard Baptists as Christians,” and I knew I had damage control to do; so I told the preceding story about leaving my toolbox open overnight, and I asked, “What would happen if I did that in Paducah?” There was universal consensus that the box would have been stolen, if not everything, a statement I later found to be true. I then asked, “So where are the better Christians, there or here, if Christianity is about doing what is right?”

The problem inherent with Latter Day Saints are the other texts used to establish their beliefs and practices, but when both Catholics and Protestants use a Sophist novel to establish theirs, finger pointing by either doesn't work: the Christian is the person who professes that Jesus is Lord (both Arian and Trinitarian do), believes the Father raised Jesus from death, and who manifests love for God, neighbor, and brother by those things

that the Christian does when nobody is looking. For all who profess that Jesus is Lord will be filled-with and empowered by the divine breath of God at the Second Passover liberation of Israel, the nation to be circumcised of heart. All will have the Law written on hearts and placed in minds so that there is an equality of spiritual knowledge (not overall knowledge), an equality of opportunity, an equal chance to be glorified if the Christian doesn't return to his or her present beliefs (to dogmas delivered via a novel, a fiction, a text that sprung from the head of another man).

And the two witnesses, because they are the signet of the Lord, will be hated by Arians and Trinitarians alike; for the words of the two witnesses are unalterable. Once they shut skies by speaking droughts into existence, no rain will fall on these locations throughout the days of their prophesying (Rev 11:6). There will be nothing that can undo what they have declared. Their words will be as the inscribed word of the king of Persia was, permanent, reified into things that affect millions of people. And the two witnesses will speak into existence plagues of all sorts over peoples and lands that continue to support the present prince of this world and his democratic ideology imbedded in transactional economies (buying and selling).

The endtime good news that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13; 10:22) is an easy message to proclaim throughout the world as a witness to all nations, but it isn't any easy message for Christians—Arians or Trinitarians—to believe; for the message says that salvation doesn't come via profession that Jesus is Lord, but by simply enduring without taking upon oneself the mark of the beast, the tattoo of the cross. This is contrary to everything Paul taught in Acts ... yes, it is. But it isn't contrary to what Jesus taught according to Matthew's Gospel.

Christians need to quit thinking in terms of being sole possessors of the truth, especially when the "truth" possessed includes the Book of Acts or the Book of Mormon. Even Luke's Gospel, the basis for Catholic adoration of Mary, is problematic and will be examined in this Volume Four of *A Philadelphia Apologetic*. And what will be found calls into question its reliability as an inspired text. It is, rather, what it claims to be:

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught. (Luke 1:1-4)

The author of Luke's Gospel was neither an eyewitness nor a minister of the word: he was a writer, who like other writers, had taken it upon himself to compile an account of the Jesus Movement. His qualifications for writing is that he has "followed all things closely for some time past.." He writes not to reveal knowledge but to confirm things that have been taught. But this is not how Christians have *used* Luke's Gospel: the Roman Church has used Luke to establish and continue a *Mary* cult that closely approximates ancient Canaan's *mother of God* idolatry.

Again, the claim made by the author of Luke's Gospel wasn't that his biography of Jesus revealed new knowledge of Jesus to a *Lover of God*, but that his biography was written to confirm what this *Lover of God* had already been taught, but taught by whom? By one of the first disciples? By Paul? By a Pauline convert? So if Luke's Gospel is

confirmation that a particular teaching was true, what is the real purpose of this biography? Just confirmation of another teaching? It wasn't—as Paul's epistles were—written to correct errant beliefs or practices, but to provide certainty that is apparently necessary to bolster faith. And that should raise red flags in the minds of endtime readers.

The author of Luke's Gospel claims to have closely followed the emergence of the Jesus Movement ... if this author were a disciple truly born of God, he would write differently than he has; for Paul writes (via a scribe),

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit 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. (Rom 8:5–8)

A person, any person, not born of God as a son cannot understand the things of God; for this person, regardless of intellect, has his mind set on physical things such as who Mary, mother of Jesus, was as a person, and how is Jesus related to John the Baptist?

Because John the Baptist's father was (according to Luke's Gospel) Zechariah, a priest of the division of Abijah, both of John's parents would have been Levites ... how is Mary, mother of Jesus, related to Elizabeth? Was Mary also a Levite? If she were a close relative to Elizabeth, she would have to be. Thus for Jesus to be of Judah, then it is His legal lineage that has importance which now loops back to King Solomon serving in the role of high priest when the temple was dedicated:

Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the court, and he stood on it. Then he knelt on his knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven, and said, "O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to your servants who walk before you with all their heart

As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord's house. When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the Lord on the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the pavement and worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever." Then the king and all the people offered sacrifice before the Lord. King Solomon offered as a sacrifice 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. The priests stood at their posts; the Levites also, with the instruments for music to the Lord that King David had made for giving thanks to the Lord—for his steadfast love endures forever—whenever David offered praises by their ministry; opposite them the priests sounded trumpets, and all Israel stood. And Solomon consecrated the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord, for there he offered the burnt offering and the fat of the

peace offerings, because the bronze altar Solomon had made could not hold the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat. (2 Chron 6:12–14; 7:1–7)

Solomon was of the house of Judah and the son of King David. In order for Jesus to serve as high priest, doing what Solomon did who had no legal authority except that of being the temple's builder to offer sacrifice, Jesus needed to be related to David through Solomon, not through another son *regardless of whether Jesus was an actual descendant of David's through Solomon*. This is an important point. Jesus could not be understood as a priest after of the order of Melchizedek without first being understood as a king after the order of Solomon, who offered sacrifice in the temple by possessing the authority of being the builder of the temple ... Jesus is the builder of the temple of God that is the Christian Church; therefore He has the authority of being circumcised-of-heart Israel's high priest and making sacrifice on behalf of this Israel. He is indeed a priest after the order of Melchizedek, but Melchizedek wasn't well understood even within Israel. Solomon was understood.

Therefore, because spiritually Jesus' genealogy needed to come through Solomon, Matthew's Gospel has His genealogy coming through Solomon, revealing a truth that was a *spiritual* thing.

Luke's Gospel has Jesus descending from King David through Nathan, the son of David, but Jesus through Nathan, while probably factually true, doesn't convey the spiritual truth that Jesus is the builder of the temple and the one who will do spiritually what Solomon did physically. Thus, it can be here suggested that the author of Luke's Gospel was physically minded; for he neither placed Jesus' descent through Melchizedek nor from Solomon, but most likely related the physical genealogy of Joseph, Jesus' legal father, to whom Jesus was unrelated.

The genealogy beginning Matthew's Gospel in an unusual way recognizes that Jesus is biologically unrelated to his legal father, Joseph, and if only related to King David, being the son of David, through the construction and dedication of the temple of God if Mary is truly a relative to Elizabeth; for if a near relative, Mary would also be of Levi, which somewhat explains her zeal for the Lord.

There are other places to which I will get that reveal the author of Luke's Gospel was not born of God and therefore had no spiritual discernment—and if this author was not born of God, then the trustworthiness of the biography is no greater than a narrative of any other man ... an academic practicing historical criticism will find and discuss lacunae in surviving New Testament texts, and will with professionalism and honesty attempt to explain what he or she discovers, but lacking spiritual birth and the indwelling of Christ Jesus, this academic will not understand spiritual things such as why Matthew's Gospel has Jesus descending from David through Solomon when Jesus is technically not a descendant of David.

3.

I was called to reread prophecy, not to make disciples nor to make nice with bloggers or the little people whose pantry shelves hold more than their minds. I neither ask for support nor take up an offering at weekly Sabbath services or on high days. And without asking for support, I am truly more financially impoverished than any critic I may have—and considering what I write, especially that the Book of Acts is a Trojan text, a

Sophist novel, I should have a host of critics. So for the person who will take the time to follow the money, the trail is short: let it be known, I don't reread prophecy, placing in print, hardcopy and electronic, what I find in Scripture because I want the adulation of disciples or the wealth of this world. I have already lived, from my perspective, in the choicest places in North America—the Oregon Coast, Kenai, Kodiak, Dutch Harbor—so it isn't for material reasons I have declared since 2003 that there will be a Second Passover liberation of Israel, the nation to be circumcised of heart, from indwelling sin and death. I have nothing to gain from declaring a necessarily unpopular message, especially among uncovered firstborns, biological and legal. But it was to this task that I was called, and it is this task that I have done and will do and will continue to do.

Actually, I am surprised by how rare criticism of what I write is, considering the radical nature of what I have placed in print. And I appreciate knowing that someone has read my words. Now, if these readers will take the time necessary to look up the scriptural passages I cite and determine for themselves if I have faithfully cited the passage, using the passage in a reasonable manner, they may still disagree with me but they will find that there is no attempt to deceive, to make disciples, to enrich myself. The work I do is unlike any since the days of the Apostle Paul, and the very small amount of support received about equals what is spent on websites and office supplies. The bulk of my income comes from the work of my hands, past and present.

Would I have more credibility if there were many disciples and a mega-Church-complex, a television and radio broadcast, a slick magazine (that says nothing), and a reporter in Jerusalem ... no, I wouldn't. I would merely have more critics, with more screeching, squealing, their diminutive minds scurrying about searching for discrepancies (where I said such and such in 2003, but now say something a little different in 2012, as if I ceased to grow in grace and knowledge when setting out to reread prophecy).

My credibility will come with the Second Passover, or wouldn't come ever. And that is fine with me.

When a young man, hunting (and fishing to a less degree) was of most importance—and I have hunted as a state resident big game in those places I read about in *Outdoor Life* and *Field and Stream* as a high school student. I have killed enough game that I no longer have a desire to take another life. On Kodiak, I legally hunted deer from the first of August through the seventh of January, with seven tags to fill in 1982 (I was with my daughters when they harvested their seven deer each as I was with my wife when she harvested hers). Other years had fewer tags, but what I found when hunting deer for five months was that I tired of hunting. It wasn't enough; it wasn't spiritually satisfying. I wanted more, and catching silvers on a fly rod wasn't the *more* I sought.

I hadn't then realized that for the person truly born of God, the things of this world can never satisfy the living inner self. Only growing in grace and knowledge gives satisfaction.

Thus the adulation of disciples—a thing of this world—can never satisfy the living inner self, nor can the wealth of this world. While it would be nice to be able to pay my nine hundred dollar a year property tax bill on time rather than a year late, we have enough foodstuffs put away to eat until harvest season next year, something I would advise even my critics to do.

The work of maintaining the website for *The Philadelphia Church*, for maintaining my websites and the other associated websites is done by my wife, who also works as I do, without pay. And she works long hours; for she is not a professionally trained IT person. Without her, little would get done. So the diminutive wit of a critic will more likely experience her wrath than mine; for I don't bother to investigate who says what about me. I don't really care. Therefore, when I declare that Acts is a Trojan horse that has been inside the gates of New Jerusalem far too long, Acts is a Sophist novel. If you disagree, try to prove me wrong. You can't, and you know it. And you should be embarrassed that you didn't recognize it as a novel before I did.

To those who support me, I am grateful, extremely appreciative—and knowing that each of you shall receive the same reward I receive keeps me working, keeps me striving to do better and go father than simply declaring that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13), the message I was called to deliver when rereading prophecy.

This Volume Four of *APA* wasn't planned, but was made necessary by me growing in grace and knowledge. As Volume Three differed in tone and style from Volumes One and Two, Volume Four will differ from Volume Three as well as from One and Two. It will use more non-scriptural citations as seen so far. And it will deconstruct Matthew's Gospel as well as Luke's; for the biographies were written after the first disciples no longer expected Jesus to return in their lifetimes. These biographies were written for us, endtime disciples, without their writers fully realizing that we would not live in the same culture as they lived, that we would not hear the same voicing they heard, that we would understand theological discourses as they did. Thus, a significant portion of the following three chapters will be an attempt to recover what has been lost.

My wife is a French Colonial reenactress, a recognized expert on 18th-Century French cooking and culture in North America. And while she wears the clothes of the period, and uses the cookware of the period, after an event she drives home in a Ford F150 pickup, with her I-pod with her. She cannot truly recreate the mindset of the period, when the French colonial was at home in the clothes and with the food.

So it is with attempting to re-voice the biographies of Jesus.

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