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What Herbert Armstrong Didn't Know

Argument: As a self-educated theologian, Herbert W. Armstrong as the Pastor-General of the former Radio Church of God and Worldwide Church of God, never understood the basic construction of Hebraic poetics, that the visible, physical things of this world reveal and precede the invisible spiritual things of God, with outwardly circumcised Israel forming the chiral (or left hand) image of circumcised of heart Israel, the assembly of inner selves born of spirit through the indwelling of Christ Jesus. Because Armstrong never understood theological chirality, Armstrong placed importance on the surfaces of things and people; importance on appearances, gender, skin color, and genealogy. He therefore prevented himself from understanding the mysteries of God, and was and remained a spiritual novice throughout his ministry that extended from 1934 to 1986.

1.

Twenty-nine years have passed since members of the former Worldwide Church of God (WCG) learned their Pastor General died shortly before 6:00 a.m. PST, January 16, 1986 ... in the summer of 1985, I was visited by a long time WCG member, Jack Etsel, who, during dinner conversation, said, *Mr. Armstrong preaches that time is short because time is short for him*. I was mildly shocked by what I heard; by what Jack said. I believed that the end of the age was or nearly was upon humanity. And without then responding to what Jack said, I nevertheless remembered his words—

When Jack Etsel said what he did about the senior Armstrong, I didn't know Jack all that well. I had, the previous fall, killed a moose on a hunt with Jack. Otherwise, I knew Jack as a two year Washington (Seattle area) transplant to Alaska. Of course, I was an Oregon transplant from eleven years earlier. I knew other members of the Anchorage and Kenai WCG congregations better than I knew Jack.

I, too, was a WCG member, attending services since 1972, baptized prior to Passover 1973, journeying north to Alaska spring 1974, opening a chainsaw-outboard dealership on Poppy Lane just off K-Beach Road in late 1976. So what I will write about Herbert Armstrong doesn't come from the perspective of an outsider, but from having heard what was preached from pulpits and having read what was written in Co-Worker letters during the 1970s and 1980s. However, I was then busy making a living, trying to get a woefully under-capitalized business operational; so though I heard what was preached and what wasn't, I didn't spend time worrying about whether chicanery was occurring in Pasadena. Armstrong's racism troubled me less than it should have. And how tithe

moneys were spent was between the administration and Christ Jesus (my responsibility for my tithe ended when I put the check in the mail).

After Armstrong's death, I stayed with WCG, and probably stayed longer than I should have ... I kept the Feast of Tabernacles with WCG in 1997, but I had quit attending weekly Sabbath services late in 1995.

I attended with Seventh Day Adventists for a few months in fall 1998 ... I had attended Adventist services throughout high school, thanks mainly to Mom marrying a Seventh Day Adventist a year and a half after Dad died suddenly; so I was familiar with Adventist doctrine, and knew where I disagreed with what was taught from their pulpit.

I couldn't resist, however, correcting the member of the Orofino, Idaho, Adventist Church leading an adult Bible study about Jonah: when the man leading the Bible study said that Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh because he knew that preaching repentance to Nineveh would do no good, I stopped him, saying, *No, Jonah knew Nineveh would repent and Jonah wanted Nineveh, Israel's enemy, wiped out.* From the response on the man's face, evidently correcting the leader of a Bible study wasn't proper form, but the pastor confirmed what I said; then after the study took me aside and said, *There's a United Church of God (UCG) congregation meeting in Lewiston ...* UCG was a splinter of the former WCG, and I really wasn't interested in fellowshiping with rebels. However, in January 1999, I called Earl Roemer, then the UCG pastor in Hawaii, but formally the WCG minister in Anchorage from 1977 to 1987 and a friend with whom I had hunted deer on Kodiak when living there.

We spoke for three-plus hours ... I was teaching as adjunct faculty for Lewis-Clark State College in Lewiston, Idaho; teaching outreach [off-campus] courses at Orofino, living in the Clearwater Canyon just upriver from Peck. So the call represented an unbudgeted expense that couldn't be repeated—and didn't need to be repeated for Earl contacted UCG's headquarters on my behalf. From 1999 through 2001, I kept the Passover with UCG.

In the years since summer 1985, Jack Etsel's words have remained with me.

The senior Armstrong's time was indeed short—is my time short? Is that why I too declare that time is short?

I have applied Jack's words to myself and to what I write about time being short since being audibly called to reread prophecy on January 17, 2002, forty years to the day and to the hour from when Garner Ted Armstrong told the Advanced Prophecy Seminar at Ambassador College (AC), Pasadena (the seminar consisting of the senior men then at Headquarters, assembled together by the Pastor General), that there would be no new revelation; everything was known; his father was merely having doubts about what had been revealed to him.

The senior Armstrong during the initial Advanced Prophecy Seminar session told his evangelists that all wasn't known, that the Church had prophecy wrong, that the Church had to get prophecy right, that all ideas would be welcomed and explored. But he taught only this first seminar section. He left teaching following sessions to his son.

Did the senior Armstrong ever know that his son squelched any exploration of biblical prophecy at a time when the senior Armstrong knew he had prophecy wrong and sought to correct error? I don't know. In January 1962, I was a junior in high school

and not connected in any way to Armstrong's ministry ... so how do I know what was said in that Advanced Prophecy Seminar?

I was given the names of the men in the seminar by Ray Dick, who in spring 1962 was a senior at Ambassador and taking fourth year Bible from Al Portune, an evangelist in the Advanced Prophecy Seminar. Ray gave me the names of the men in the seminar and told what was said and by whom as Al Portune had reported this information to his fourth year Bible class.

The story of the Advanced Prophecy Seminar seemed significant; for rejection of revelation was serious. I sought to verify or dismiss the story by writing to Garner Ted and to Roderick Meredith in 2002 (my third letter to Garner Ted was in early spring 2003). I pointedly asked both men if the story as told to me (to each I relayed what has been told to me) about the Advanced Prophecy Seminar was true. Garner Ted in gracious responses to my three separate letters neither confirmed nor denied the story. However, Roderick Meredith confirmed the story and told me that I needed to return to the senior Armstrong's understanding of prophecy.

Is Meredith's testimony, coupled with Ray Dick's, sufficient to establish the story of the Advanced Prophecy Seminar? For me, the story is established by being audibly called to reread prophecy about 10:12 am CST on Thursday of the second full week in January 2002 ... the Advanced Prophecy Seminar met at 8:00 am PST on Thursday, spring semester 1962. And it would have taken Garner Ted about twelve minutes to say that there would be no new revelation, that his dad had prophecy right. I have been in front of enough classes to have a good sense of how long it would have taken Garner Ted to say what he did. So for me, my calling to reread prophecy came exactly forty years after Garner Ted rejected further revelation on behalf of his father. The timing doesn't seem coincidental.

I didn't know about the Advance Prophecy Seminar until Ray Dick, after reading the first draft of *A Philadelphia Apologetic* (completed in March 2002), told me about the seminar ... I had asked Ray Dick to read the draft because he was a family friend of my wife, both of whom were/are interested in anthropology.

So before proceeding, let it be understood that Herbert W. Armstrong knew he had prophecy wrong four years after the Treaty of Rome was signed March 1957: the European Union wasn't coming together as Armstrong had prophesied. Events were happening much more slowly than he expected, and were going in a direction he hadn't anticipated. He realized what he had said throughout the 1950s, and as far back as 1934, was wrong.

Why, then, did he continue to proclaim the same prophetic message throughout the 1960s and to his death in January 1986? And could a multi-million dollar a year ministry based on a particular understanding of biblical prophecy really admit it had prophecy wrong all along and still economically survive? No, it could not.

Armstrong's ministry spiritually died in 1962, when additional revelation was rejected. It would have economically died if additional revelation had not been rejected, what Garner Ted understood. So neither Armstrong understood one of the most important pillars of theological knowledge: "Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 5:20) ... Pharisees were hypocrites. Both the senior and the junior Armstrong were, following

that Advanced Prophecy Seminar, hypocrites. Whether they were before in their personal lives I will leave to others. I have no knowledge about either's personal life that isn't already in the public domain (except for the moose Garner Ted shot in 1975).

With God, no hypocrisy is allowed. For me, this means that if I realized something is true or false, I have to declare what I realize even if declaring the realization makes me an iconoclast, not something I would have willingly set out to be ... now, thirteen years after being called to reread prophecy I find that textual honesty requires me to become like Oedipus.

2.

Herbert Armstrong taught that disciples are not born of spirit until they receive spiritual bodies that do not bleed when pricked by a pin, the infamous pin test. The senior Armstrong didn't understand, never understood spiritual birth or how the Holy Spirit was received. He was, apparently, more concerned about refuting the mainstay Protestant dogma of *once saved, always saved*, than about understanding the consistent messaging in Scripture that the physical, visible things of this world reveal and precede the invisible, spiritual things of God, with circumcision of the flesh [where droplets of blood are shed] forming the dark shadow and copy [the chiral image] of circumcision of the heart where the *heart* is used as an euphemistic expression for the non-physical inner self of a human person. Armstrong never understood that the glory of God (Ezek 1:26–28) came from the breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] fueling the *bright fire* that sustains life outside of the physical creation whereas human breath, physical breath, fuels the *dark fire* of cellular oxidation that sustains physical life.

Men are their inner selves dwelling in clay houses, the reality disclosed by a demonic spirit to Eliphaz the Temanite before Eliphaz gave bad counsel to the man Job:

[Eliphaz speaking] Amid thoughts from visions of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, dread came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones shake. A spirit glided past my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern its appearance. A form was before my eyes; there was silence, then I heard a voice: "Can mortal man be in the right before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker? *Even in His servants He puts no trust, and His angels He charges with error; how much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed like the moth.* Between morning and evening they are beaten to pieces; they perish forever without anyone regarding it. Is not their tent-cord plucked up within them, do they not die, and that without wisdom?" (Job 4:13–21 emphasis added)

The Lord, known to Job as *Shaddai*, did not reveal to Job or to Eliphaz that men dwelt in clay houses: a spirit did that accuses God of wrongly charging angels with error. So not much credence should be given to what Eliphaz told Job if the Lord had not told Jeremiah to go to the potter's house:

The word that came to Jeremiah from [*YHWH*]: "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do. Then the word of [*YHWH*] came to me: "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. ..." (Jer 18:1–6)

And if Matthew's Jesus hadn't used the same analogy:

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean. (Matt 23:25–26 — also found in Luke)

Men dwell in clay houses, with these clay houses being like clay cups. The fleshly body is made up of Earth's base elements, the clay [red mud] used to construct the first Adam. It is the clay house that bleeds when pricked by a pin, not the inner man that animates this clay house.

Armstrong preached a *two-house-of-Israel* doctrine dubbed British Israelism. For Armstrong, endtime Israel consisted of descendants of the House of Israel, the northern kingdom of Samaria [the so-called lost ten tribes], and descendants of the southern House of Judah, the Jews, the modern State of Israel (although when Armstrong borrowed the concepts undergirding British Israelism, the Zionist Movement was still developing in the British protectorate). For Armstrong, endtime prophecies about *Israel* were about modern descendants of the ancient House of Israel, not about the Jews. Yet, the prophet Ezekiel records,

In the morning the word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man, *has not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, 'What are you doing?'* Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: *This oracle concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are in it.*' Say, 'I am a sign for you: as I have done, so shall it be done to them. They shall go into exile, into captivity.' ... And the word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man, *what is this proverb that you have about the land of Israel, saying, 'The days grow long, and every vision comes to nothing?'* Tell them therefore, 'Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: I will put an end to this proverb, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel.' But say to them, *The days are near, and the fulfillment of every vision. For there shall be no more any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel.* For I am [YHWH]; I will speak the word that I will speak, and it will be performed. *It will no longer be delayed, but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it,* declares the Lord [YHWH]." And the word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man, behold, *they of the house of Israel say, 'The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.'* Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: None of my words will be delayed any longer, but the word that I speak will be performed, declares the Lord [YHWH]." (Ezek 12:8–11; 21–28 emphasis added)

What Armstrong didn't understand was that physical *Israel* was the topographical representation of the Promised Land, that *Israel* shrank in size from the lands over which David had dominion to the size of the lands over which Solomon had dominion to the size of the two kingdoms, Samaria and Jerusalem. Then when the northern kingdom of Samaria went into captivity, *Israel* shrank in size again, and was only as large as Jerusalem and the cities Jerusalem ruled. When first Pharaoh then Nebuchadnezzar captured the House of Judah and established who would be king over Jerusalem, *Israel* shrank even smaller and became no larger than the temple mount. And when the armies of Nebuchadnezzar razed the city and the temple in 586 BCE, *Israel* was physically dead. But physical *Israel* was resurrected from death when Cyrus, king of Persia, commanded [539 BCE] that a temple be built for the God of heaven at Jerusalem (Ezra 1:2).

Life was "breathed" back into physical *Israel* by Cyrus responding to the command of the Lord. But *Israel* never again was larger than the temple mount ... yes, returning

Jews eventually gained their independence from the Seleucid Empire and briefly ruled themselves, but the *Israel* that was the topographical representation of the Promised Land went from geographical coordinates to theological coordinates, with the Sabbath being the representation of the Promised Land and with the assembly Jesus built being the temple of God (John 20:21-23; 1 Cor 3:16-17; 2 Cor 6:16).

What had been physical and able to be measured in hectares became spiritual and measured in knowledge of God; hence, since physical *Israel's* greatest size came at the end of David's reign, spiritual *Israel's* greatest possession of knowledge will come at the end of the Endurance in Jesus, the last 1260 days of the seven endtime years. In analogy, we are today where Samuel was, where physical *Israel* was when the Ark of the Covenant was returned (1 Sam chap 7, and in particular verses 13-14).

The entirety of Armstrong's ministry was built not on Sabbath observance or believing the writings of Moses, but on Armstrong's understanding of biblical prophecy that caused him to write in a 1948 Co-Worker letter the following:

December 8, 1947

Dear Family of Co-Workers' in God's Service:

GREETINGS! in Jesus' name: TIME is running out! This world is moving swiftly to its destruction! Yet there is still time---and just barely enough time---to finish the work of God for this present age. THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE. But the work of God is progressing on schedule--amid handicaps, thru obstacles and trials that try our souls, our patience, and our faith to the limit---under the divine direction of God, and as a result of MIRACLES performed by him in our behalf.

The "Big Four" diplomats are locked in an uncompromisable duel between East and West---between Russia and the United States---between Communism and Democracy---between Atheism and professed Christianity. At the London conference, the nations merely lock horns and fight, and quarrel, and deadlock, in their efforts to restore the peace of Europe and the world.

The United States announces the invention and production of horrible, terrifying new atomic weapons---without giving the public any hint as to the nature of those weapons. The Russians give out hints that they, too, either HAVE the atomic bomb, or have its secret and are now preparing to actually produce it.

The United Nations recommend the partitioning of Palestine, and actual setting up, at last, of a new Jewish NATION in the holy land. This sets off the Palestine powder-keg. The Moslem nations, 300 million strong and solidly ORGANIZED these past three years, have announced they will never permit it---they spring to action---fighting and violence is intensified in the holy land, and terror reigns.

Europe faces its hardest winter, and the United States, with diminishing food supplies, sets out to try to feed the world to save it from chaos and communism and starvation.

Yes, this world is being hurled rapidly TOWARD UTTER DESTRUCTION---we approach the END OF THE WORLD!---which means the end of this AGE!

The WORLD TOMORROW will soon dawn, bringing peace, prosperity, happiness and joy at last;--and in the short time that remains our calling and sole important mission in life is to SHOUT THIS GOOD NEWS (the true Gospel of Jesus Christ) TO THE WORLD! It must go, not only to America and Canada, as it is now going, it must go to ALL NATIONS, in ALL LANGUAGES! To this end, AMBASSADOR COLLEGE is now operating in sober earnest---instructing consecrated, eager young men and women in the true Message, training them in speaking foreign languages.

THE OUTLOOK, at the moment, is for six or seven more years of PROSPERITY here in America--(even tho it is an artificial, unsound and inflated "prosperity")---while meantime the world moves relentlessly toward WORLD WAR III and final DESTRUCTION!

YOU, dear Co-Worker, are not going to be permitted to enjoy your home, your freedom, your present privileges and pursuits, many more years. Just a few more years---perhaps six or seven---perhaps twelve or fifteen---and a re-united Fascist-Nazi Europe will STRIKE---America's great cities will be blown out of existence in one night without warning---we shall see such tremendous

atomic destruction as the world has never even dreamed ---more than 40 MILLION Americans will perish in the horrifying blasts! At the same time drought and famine will strike dead another THIRD of our entire population---men, women, and children ---thru starvation and disease! And our second great commission ---our divine calling from Almighty God---is to WARN our beloved nation, and other Israelitish nations, before it is too late! Every individual who HEEDS this warning, turns to God, is WATCHING and PRAYING ALWAYS, being filled with God's Spirit, living by every Word of God, with a life consecrated to Him, will be given special divine protection---taken beforehand to a place of SAFETY--- preserved thru the final horrifying tribulation, time of plagues and human anguish soon to visit this earth! But if we to whom God has revealed this terrible future thru His divine prophecies fail to heed it--- if we fail to each play his or her full part in WARNING this nation and the world, now, while we may---then God says we shall not escape, but He will require the blood of this entire people at our hands!

All emphasis is that of Armstrong ... the letter goes on, but enough is here presented for the tone and tenor of the message Armstrong proclaimed to be grasped—

Six or seven more years of American prosperity; six or seven more years, twelve to fifteen at most before a re-united Fascist Nazi Europe will destroy America—this is what Herbert Armstrong taught. This is the prophetic message he knew he had wrong in the fall of 1961, when he scheduled that Advanced Prophecy Seminar for spring semester 1962.

What Armstrong didn't know and never knew was that the two houses of Israel consisted of the nation formed by natural descendants of the patriarchs, all outwardly circumcised [circumcised in the flesh], and the spiritual nation of Israel composed of the inner selves of human persons who were circumcised of heart. And in this latter nation of Israel, there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, slave nor free; for as many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ and are therefore Abraham's offspring, heirs of promises as sons of God (Gal 3:26–29).

Armstrong never got beyond the surface of things, the fleshly houses that bleed.

Again (for emphasis), the Apostle Paul—to whom the senior Armstrong compared himself shortly before marrying Ramona Martin in 1977—wrote in his epistle to the Churches in Galatia: “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:27–28) ... consider for a moment the reality of what Paul wrote: if a person is baptized into Christ and puts on Christ as if Christ were a garment and therefore becomes a son of God that is not male or female when the person is raised from the baptismal pool, the person isn't the fleshly body of the person.

When a baptized person is raised from symbolic death, the fleshly body is unchanged; the fleshly body has experienced no death. If the person were a circumcised male, the person raised from baptism is still a circumcised male. If the person were a woman and by her biological gender unable to be circumcised, the person will be raised from baptism as a woman, the same woman she was before she was baptized. So what Paul addresses isn't the fleshly person that cannot enter heaven or receive immortality (1 Cor 15:50)—the fleshly body that bleeds—but an inner self, a non-physical (without substance) inner person that was dead (without spiritual life). What Paul addresses is the inner self that is raised to life through receipt of a second breath of life, the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] entering into the spirit of

the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*]. This inner person, when the fleshly body is humanly born, is without indwelling life (*Permit the dead to bury the dead of themselves* — Matt 8:22) until raised in a resurrection like that of Christ Jesus, when the spirit of God descended in the bodily form of a dove and entered into [*eis* — from Mark 1:10] the man Jesus the Nazarene.

An issue that cannot be avoided is the racism, sexism of Herbert Armstrong, who was a product of his age, not a new creature in Christ Jesus ... in ancient Israel (and in modern fundamentalist Islam), women were chattel, property analogous to a circumcised man's house: "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's" (Ex 20:17).

A woman belonged to a man, either to the woman's father or to her husband ... this concept is abhorrent to modern women in Western nations. More damage has been done to the concept of deity by the Tenth Commandment in Western culture than can ever be imagined, with very few Christians realizing that the living inner self of a human person [when born of spirit] is analogous to the outwardly circumcised husband. The fleshly body in which the inner self dwells is analogous to the woman, with the fleshly body [because it is perishable] not able to inherit immortality (1 Cor 15:50 second clause). Rather, the glorified inner self will receive from Christ Jesus a new imperishable body that won't necessarily look like the fleshly body/bodies, especially of older persons. And it was for this reason that women, the dark shadow of a spiritual reality, lacked legal "personhood" under Moses (and now under Mohammad).

So there is no ambiguity: in Christ, there is neither male nor female. All disciples, individually and collectively, form the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27), with no human person able to enter heaven except through the indwelling of Christ Jesus as Paul expresses this reality in Galatians 2:20 ("I have been crucified with Christ. *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.* And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" — emphasis added). The human person who remains apart from Christ is spiritually as a woman was physically in ancient Israel, an individual without *personhood*.

Spiritual birth is about divine procreation and is foreshadowed by human procreation: as a man (the husband, the head of his wife) enters into his wife and leaves his seed, and as the wife conceives a child, nurtures the child in her womb, then gives birth to this child that finally breathes on his or her own as a newly born infant, the spirit of God the Father [*pneuma Theou*] entered into the man Jesus and into His spirit which was then raised from the death that had come upon the spirit of <'o Logos> through human birth when this one, *Theos*, entered His creation as His unique Son ... when the Logos entered His creation to visit with Abraham (Gen 18:1–5), and to wrestle with Jacob (Gen 32:28–30), and to give Moses instructions from atop Mount Sinai, the Logos—the Creator of all things physical—entered as Himself. But as Himself, He could not construct the bridge between the living and the dead, whose God is the *Theos* of dead ones. He had to surrender His divinity and die spiritually. And this is what we see in Paul's epistle to the Philippians:

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in *Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied*

Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2:5–11 emphasis added)

About this, Jesus prayed to the Father:

Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, *glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.* (John 17:1–5 emphasis added)

But what Jesus prayed; what Paul wrote in his epistle to the Philippians was declared in advance in the preface [prologue] to John's Gospel:

In [*arche* — “primacy,” because of the absence of the definite article] was the Word [*'o Logos*], and the Word was with [*pros* — “with” or “of”] God [*ton Theon* — definite article included but omitted in English translations], and the Word [*'o Logos*] was God [*Theos* — no definite article]. He was in [primacy] with [the] God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. (John 1:1–3)

In Greek, definite nouns have definite articles, with this relationship so *tight* that articles alone are often used as pronouns; thus, for the definite article for <*Theos*> not to be included in the third clause of the opening sentence necessitates that <*Theos*> shares the article of <*'o Logos*>, thereby separating *Theos/Logos* [nominative case] from *ton Theon* [objective case of <*'o Theos*>]. Two deities have definite articles, and by extension, two deities have definiteness, with these two initially forming one deity as a husband and his wife are one flesh. However, with the Logos entering His creation as His unique Son (John 3:16), only one deity remained in heaven: God the Father, the *Theos* of dead ones, the unknown God for the dead know nothing (Eccl 9:5), especially not the God of these dead ones.

For this reason, the resurrected Jesus in John's Gospel tells Mary Magdalene, “Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God”” (John 20:17).

The God of all sons of God is the Father, the God and Father of the glorified Son ...

There will be readers who say that what I write is confusing; that I make no sense. So I shall attempt to clarify what Herbert Armstrong actually understood.

The man Jesus of Nazareth was not fathered by a descendant of the first Adam, but was fathered by the Logos, who created all things physical. Therefore, the man Jesus was not born consigned to disobedience as all other men are (see Rom 11:32), but was born free to believe the writings of Moses and to believe the words of the Father that the Logos spoke to human persons either directly or in vision; for the Logos was to the Father as a wife is to her husband (as Aaron was to Moses). The Logos served as the mouth of the Father, the mouth that spoke into existence all that is physical.

But in leaving heaven to be born as His unique Son, the Logos gave up both equality with God and indwelling heavenly life. He was not both man and God when humanly born to the woman Mary, betrothed wife of Joseph. He was fully man, both inner self

and outer self, meaning that He had a spiritually dead inner self that needed to be resurrected to life as a human person has life, loses life, then needs to be resurrected to life if this person is to live again. Therefore, when a human person receives the indwelling of the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] the human person has been resurrected to life in a resurrection like that of Christ Jesus, about which Paul wrote:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. For *the death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives He lives to God*. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. (Rom 6:3–13 emphasis added)

When did *the life He lives He lives to God* begin? Following Calvary? Or following baptism?

In John's Gospel, Jesus says,

Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in Him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees Him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge Him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For *I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has Himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.* And I know that His commandment is eternal life. *What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.* (John 12:44–50 emphasis added)

The life He lives He lives to God began with Jesus' baptism followed by receipt of the indwelling spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] when the spirit of God entered into Him in the bodily form of a dove. The resurrection that disciples will experience that is like Christ's comes upon disciples when their dead inner selves are raised to life through the indwelling of Christ Jesus. Christian orthodoxy at least partially understands this in its linguistic concept of *regeneration of souls*, phrasing I have avoided using because of the implication of the soul having preexistence prior to regeneration. And certainly since the days of Noah, this is simply not the case: since the world was baptized into death in the days of Noah, the inner self of humanly born persons are born dead. When the world will be baptized into life through the spirit of God being poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28; Matt 3:11), every human person will be born filled with spirit, with no indwelling sin or death. Thus barring accidental death or murder, a human person will live from birth to the end of the Thousand Years [the Millennium] after the world is baptized into life.

Today, if God doesn't intervene in a person's life and withdraw the person from this world by delivering the person to Christ Jesus to be called, justified, and glorified, the person will die physically and not live again until after the Thousand Tears when the

person is resurrected in the great White Throne Judgment—not a judgment that occurs inside the creation but a judgment that occurs outside the creation:

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it. *From His presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.* And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. (Rev 20:11–13 emphasis added)

The dead in the great White Throne Judgment do not get physical bodies in which they will return to living physical lives, a concept Armstrong taught. Rather, the dead are the *dead inner selves* of human persons who have not tasted the goodness of God. And these *dead* shall be judged by what they did in their physical bodies while their bodies were humanly alive—and we have come to Paul’s Gospel:

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

Only the Elect escape judgment (John 5:24), but the Elect are not free to continue in the ways of this world: they are, through the indwelling of Christ, made slaves of obedience that leads to righteousness (again Rom 6:16). But this they chose when they listened to the voice of Jesus and heard His words and believed (as Abram did) the words of God. They could have not believed, maybe. They could have rebelled against God, maybe. But the Father through foreknowing the person *knew* that the person would believe and would not rebel and therefore predestined the person to be glorified while the inner self of this person remained a sinner. And it is for this reason that Paul writes,

For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but *God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* (Rom 5:8 emphasis added)

The soul of a human person doesn’t preexist the conception of the person—that is not how the above passage should be read ... if preexistence were a reality, then Jesus’ death at Calvary would have set every soul free from disobedience so that there would not be need for regeneration or for the inner self of the person to be raised from death. Rather, what Paul writes addresses the timelessness of the heavenly realm, where *today* is the same day as when Jesus was crucified.

The entirety of the Christian era is *<today>*, the Preparation Day for the great Sabbath of the Sabbath (from John 19:31). The entirety of the Christian era is the *First Unleavened* (from Matt 26:17 — read the verse in Greek without adding extra words), the day preceding the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And about *today*, the author of Hebrews wrote,

Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is faithful over God's house as a son. And we are His house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope. Therefore, as the Holy Spirit [set forth], "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.' As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest.'" (Heb 3:5–11)

Armstrong understood that the Logos entered His creation as His unique Son, that the Father was a deity separate from the Logos. Armstrong, however, explained the relationship between the Father and the Son in the context of a family—and this explanation really doesn't work; for God is not a family like a human family that has mad aunts in the attic and crazy uncles in the garden. The analogy that best represents the relationship of Father to Son to glorified disciples is that of marriage, where the Beloved of God functions as the wife in a human marriage, with the spirit of the Father having entered into the spirit of Christ as a husband enters his wife for purposes of procreation, then the spirit of Christ entering into the spirit of the disciple as a husband enters his wife for purposes of procreation. Whereas the Father and His Beloved functioned as one deity as a husband and his wife are one flesh, the Beloved left heaven and entered His creation and was "adopted" by the Father as His firstborn Son. The spirit of this firstborn Son now enters His disciples, each foreknown by the Father, thereby becoming one with these disciples as a husband and his wife are one flesh. The relationship between disciples and the Father is now that of sons to Father, with the glorified Christ again functioning as the woman in bringing forth heirs for her husband.

The concept of God as family is theologically limited to one family unit that is "one" through the indwelling of the spirit of God in first the spirit of Christ and then the spirit of God in the spirit of Christ indwelling in the spirit of the person ... all have heavenly life coming from receipt of the Father's breath. Thus, all are of the Father and are one with the Father. God is one! But "one" consisting of many personages as humanity itself is one flesh, all coming from the first Adam.

Both Arian Christendom and Trinitarian Christendom are heresies that will not survive into the Endurance in Jesus.

Today, I am "one" with those who came before me and with those who will come after me, as long as they have believing hearts:

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. As it is said, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was He provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. (Heb 3:12–19)

Does a person have to, today, believe God with belief that leads to obedience?

Again, look to physically circumcised Israel as the chiral image of circumcised of heart Israel to answer this question:

Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest, as He has said, "As I swore in my wrath, "They shall not enter my rest," although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." And again in this passage He said, "They shall not enter my rest." *Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience,* again He appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from His. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Heb 4:1–12 emphasis added)

The Word of God is living and active; is double-lipped, double-voiced discourse—discourse that divides soul from spirit through discernment of thoughts and intentions ...

Herbert Armstrong didn't think that his converts could grasp the nature of double-voiced discourse in which a story is told inside another story. He choose to dumb-down what he wrote, what he taught to the intellectual level of grade school children. And in so doing, he prevented himself from grasping what can be learned from the use of dual-referents ... the words of this world best express the things and stories of this world, not the things of God. Thus, to speak of heavenly things human languages have to be used metaphorically, naming things that are not by the names of things that are. And this, Herbert Armstrong never understood.

3.

The 19th-Century poet Robert Browning was self-educated. The radio host Rush Limbaugh is self-educated. Bill Gates is mostly self-educated. There are people who would say that in some respects, I am self-educated: when I had daughters ready to attend college, I was a single parent with no money. I had no way to send them to college other than to go myself and have them live with me: I had an invite, based on the strength of my fictional writings, to enter University of Alaska Fairbanks' graduate writing program even though I had no undergraduate degree nor any English coursework beyond Freshman Comp. My formal admittance into graduate school was predicated on my G.R.E. scores, which were high. So I returned to the university twenty-three years after I had, when eighteen, laid out a semester to marry and make enough money that I could continue in the Small Arms Technology program at Oregon Tech. The year was 1965. I was in a head-on accident in September that killed the other driver and left me unable to work for months. By May 1966, I was earning a thousand dollars a month and I wasn't interested in returning to Oregon Tech. (I had, fall 1963, entered Willamette University as a sixteen year old math major, but had transferred to Oregon Tech after being declared an emancipated minor following my mother's suicide; my father had died when I was eleven.)

A common characteristic of the knowledge base of self-educated people is possession of figurative "knowledge peaks" that are beyond others, and "knowledge black holes" that are

abysses, making self-educated people simultaneously the most knowledgeable and least knowledgeable people in a culture ... Herbert W. Armstrong was such a person.

But it is to another apparently self-educated person I want to first turn: Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, who wrote, *Exposition of the Sayings of the Lord* in five books, now lost except for excerpts, quotes by other authors, notably Eusebius in his third book, suggesting that Papias wrote prior to 109 CE, with modern scholarship dating Papias' books from 95 CE to 120 CE. Papias wrote at or about the time the Body of Christ died spiritually—and the spiritual Body of Christ did indeed die from want of breath [loss of the Holy Spirit] as the physical body of Christ Jesus died at Calvary ... the Body of Christ died seventy years after Calvary, with God the Father having stopped drawing persons from this world and delivering them to Christ Jesus forty years after Calvary, a year after Roman soldiers razed the physical temple in Jerusalem. Thus, when the last of those disciples truly born of spirit died physically—their souls [*psuchia*] presently sleeping under the heavenly altar (Rev 6:9)—the Body of Christ died. The Body of Christ will not be returned to life until the Second Passover liberation of Israel. As the gates of Hades could not prevail against the physical body of Jesus, the gates of Hades will not prevail against the spiritual Body of Christ.

The work of Papias, even in brief excerpts in the writings of others, is important because of how he confirms the creation and existence of the oral traditions of the Church ... Eusebius said Papias was Bishop of Hierapolis around the time of Ignatius of Antioch, and while Eusebius was troubled by Papias being a chiliast [in modern parlance, a proponent of premillennialism], chiding Papias for his literal interpretation of what were for Eusebius figurative passages, calling him a man of *little intellect* who misled Irenaeus and others, Eusebius nevertheless cited Papias concerning Matthew's and Mark's Gospels and thereby—in the case of Matthew's Gospel—gives to modern Sabbatarian Christendom a base for its greatest heresy, the use of sacred names. For Eusebius records Papias writing, *Therefore Matthew put the logia in an ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language, but each person interpreted them as best he could* [3.39].

How to interpret Eusebius' quotation from Papias has been long debated for the original context is missing and the Greek words used are ambiguous and seem to be technical rhetorical terminology. Nevertheless, the short citation forms the base for Sacred Names Heretics to argue that the Gospels were originally written in Hebrew [or Aramaic] and then translated into Greek, an argument that is unsupported by the existence of any early Hebrew accounts, and an argument that suffers from Gospel quotations of the Old Testament coming from the Septuagint.

Because Eusebius' quotation from Papias uses the term for “rhetorical terminology,” it is here with Matthew's Gospel where I want to start:

Herbert Armstrong never knew that Matthew's Gospel was not literally true; was not a historical biography of Jesus the Nazarene; but was a literary construct with fictional elements, a literary artifice that functions as prophecy.

Armstrong accepted the Bible, in its original languages, as the infallible Word of God; whereas the beginning of John's Gospel identifies the Beloved of the Father as the Word [*o Logos*] of God; a living Word, not an inscribed “word.” For all inscription comes via the hands of human agents. All inscribed texts are of men [or women], and are in human languages, with this seen in what the Lord told Moses: “Then [*YHWH*] said to Moses, ‘Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven’” (Ex 17:14).

Two elements of Scripture are immediately present: Moses is to do the writing, and he is to write about the phenomenon in his words, not words given to him by the Lord. Secondly, because Moses will write in a Semitic script that inscribes only consonant clusters, he is to “read” [give sound to, or breath to] the words he writes so that Joshua will know what vowels to insert between the Semitic consonants. Without Joshua

hearing Moses read what he wrote, ambiguity would exist for in Semitic languages [Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, for example], the same consonant cluster can represent any word within a family of words. Therefore, the person reading the Semitic text must know beforehand what word the consonant cluster represents before the word singularly and the text as a collection of consonant clusters can be read. If generational transmission of “breath” is interrupted by, say, the Book of the Covenant being lost in the dilapidated temple for some period of time then found during restoration of the temple as happened during the reign of King Josiah (2 Kings 22:8–13), the vowel sounds to be inserted between consonants will have been lost. The text must now necessarily undergo redaction; for the Semitic text that will emerge from inserting *probable* vowels between inscribed consonants will not be the text originally written and read by Moses to Joshua. It will inevitably be a new construction, what’s seen by many examples, with one being sufficient for my purposes: “God spoke to Moses and said to him, ‘I am [YHWH]. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as [El Shaddai], but by my name [YHWH] I did not make myself known to them. ...’” (Ex 6:2–3).

If what the Lord apparently told Moses is true, then Abram/Abraham would not know the Tetragrammaton YHWH as a name. Sarai/Sarah would not have known the Tetragrammaton YHWH to be a name. Isaac and Jacob would not have used YHWH as a naming noun. Yet what do we find in Scripture:

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of [El El-yone].) And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by [El El-yone], Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be [El El-yone], who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything. And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself." But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted my hand to [YHWH], [El El-yone], Possessor of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share." (Gen 14:18–24 highlighting added)

And,

After these things the word of [YHWH] came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." But Abram said, "O Lord [YHWH], what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." And behold, the word of [YHWH] came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." And he believed [YHWH], and He counted it to him as righteousness. *And He said to him, "I am [YHWH] who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess."* But he said, "O Lord [YHWH], how am I to know that I shall possess it?" (Gen 15:1–8 emphasis and highlighting added)

And,

Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the angel of [YHWH] called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a

ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called the name of that place, "[YHWH] will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of [YHWH] it shall be provided." (Gen 22:10–14 highlighting added)

The examples are many, but the point is that if the Lord did not identify Himself to Abraham by the name *YHWH*, then why has the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* been placed in Abraham's mouth as an utterance identifying the Lord as the Tetragrammaton? A redaction of Genesis has occurred. A redaction of all of the Old Testament occurred between when the Book of the Covenant was found during the days of Josiah and the 2nd-Century BCE.

In the above citations, the highlighted occurrences of Tetragrammaton *YHWH* are inscribed as utterance of the determinative *YHWH* by Abram/Abraham, who never knew *El Shaddai* or *El El-yone* [same deity with similar meanings, *God Most High*] by that name—and if a theologian cannot see that Moses, the Writings, and the Prophets have been redacted to such an extent that the always unpronounced linguistic determinative *YHWH* has been inappropriately transformed into a naming noun, the theologian is without either eyes or ears. The theologian knows nothing of God or the mysteries of God. And this was one of the theological black holes in Herbert Armstrong's knowledge base.

When writing about Matthew, Bishop Papias used the phrased translated as *<ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language>* which of itself has several possible meanings, but when coupled with language suggesting technical rhetorical techniques, the astute endtime disciple will consider the structure of Matthew's Gospel in light of Hebraic poetics that forms poetry not through oral rhyme—Hebrew as a Semitic language is only partially alphabetized and therefore relies upon the reader knowing what word an inscribed consonant cluster should represent before *sound* can be added to the consonantal silence of the clusters—but through the repetition of thought, of ideas, the movement in this repetition being from physical to spiritual ...

Hebrew poetry is constructed in *thought-couplets* that have the first presentation of an idea or concept being physical or of darkness or of community, the outside of things, the surface of things. The second presentation of the same idea or concept moves inward to being spiritual or of light or of the person, the inner self, the spirit [*pneuma*] in the soul [*psuche*]. And an example of this is seen in Isaiah:

But now thus says [$Y^a H^{d-n} W^{ai} H$],
He who created you, O Jacob, [physical, physical]
He who formed you, O Israel: [spiritual, physical]
"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; [physical, spiritual]
I have called you by name, you are mine. [spiritual, spiritual]
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; [physical, physical]
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; [spiritual, physical]
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, [physical, spiritual]
and the flame shall not consume you. [spiritual, spiritual]
For I am [$Y^a H^{d-n} W^{ai} H$] your God, [physical]
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. [spiritual]
I give Egypt as your ransom, [physical—in the days of Moses]
Cush and Seba in exchange for you. [spiritual—Moses]
Because you are precious in my eyes, [physical—the present]
and honored, and I love you, [spiritual—the present]
I give men in return for you, [physical—the future]
peoples in exchange for your life. [spiritual—the future] (Isa 43:1–4)

Rivers differ from "waters" in that rivers are "living waters"; likewise *water* differs from *fire* in that water represents death and fire, life. Thus as there was a first Passover in the days of

Moses when the Lord [Yah] liberated a physical people from physical bondage in a physical land, there will be a Second Passover at which time the Father will liberate a spiritual people from spiritual bondage [to Sin and Death] in a spiritual mindscape ruled by the spiritual king of Babylon, that old Adversary, Satan the devil.

The structure of words *in an ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language* is what's seen in the briefest possible explication of Isaiah 43:1–4 ... the ordered arrangement is in thought-couplets, best addressed in the New Testament by Paul when he writes,

For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For His invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (Rom 1:19–20)

And,

Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven. (1 Cor 15:45–49)

If we were to put what Paul wrote in prose into poetic form, it would look like,

Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; [physical]

the last Adam became a life-giving spirit [*pneuma*]. [spiritual]

The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; [physical]

the second man is from heaven. [spiritual]

As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, [physical]

and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. [spiritual]

Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, [physical]

we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven [spiritual].

An ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language is an arrangement of thought-couplets in whatever language as if the language were Hebrew. The technical rhetorical terms that Papias used and that early Greek philosophers could transcribe but not mentally translate pertained to Hebraic poetics and how knowledge of the future [prophetic knowledge] could be openly concealed from Unbelievers ... if the Unbeliever doesn't understand what Paul makes plainly evident—that the first Adam was chiral image of the last Adam, the polarized light through which modern chemists look at the chirality of molecules such as thalidomide being the light of God—the Unbeliever will inevitably practice *here a little, there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept* (from Isa 28:10, 13) exegesis, which is how the drunk priests of Ephraim taught Israel so that this people would fall backward, be broken, snared, and taken by the Adversary.

How did Herbert Armstrong teach his disciples to study Scripture? *Here a little, there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept*. How did he study Scripture? The same way. Again, what does Paul, a Hebrew, say? Does he not say that the visible physical things of this world reveal and precede the invisible spiritual things of God? And it would seem reasonable that if Matthew's Gospel is written *in an ordered arrangement in the Hebrew language style* [the missing word incorporated in the technical rhetorical terms], then endtime disciples should find in Matthew's Gospel a visible, physical presentation of data and phenomena that precedes and reveals an invisible spiritual presentation of similar data and phenomena. And disciples do.

In 2012, I explicated Matthew's Gospel in the 100,000-plus word long Volume Five of, *A Philadelphia Apologetic*. Today, having grown more in grace and knowledge, those 100,000-plus words would be 300,000 words, far too many for inclusion in this paper. So to illustrate

Matthew's thought-couplet style of construction, I'll use one motif and the transition from physical to spiritual.

In Matthew chapter twelve we find:

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." But He answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. (Matt 12:38-42)

The above is the physical presentation of the *sign of Jonah*. The focus of what Jesus said, however, is two-fold, equivalent to the *physical-physical* and *spiritual-physical* presentation of *Jacob* [physical] versus *Israel* [spiritual] in Isaiah 43:1 ...

In the physical/physical presentation, Jesus links Jonah being three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish [whale] to the Son of Man being three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Unfortunately, this is usually as far as Sabbatarian Christians go in trying to understand the *sign of Jonah*.

In the spiritual/physical presentation, two examples are used, both physical: the first being the men of Nineveh, with emphasis on "men" and the second is the queen of the South, with emphasis on "woman" ... both non-Israelite men and non-Israelite women will spiritually honor men—Jonah and Solomon—by believing them, but will not honor the Son of Man, who is/was greater than either Jonah or Solomon.

With baptism into Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female. For there to be males [men of Nineveh] and female [queen of the South], none have been baptized into Christ yet. The words that the author of Matthew's Gospel puts into Jesus' mouth are here only physical.

In Matthew chapter sixteen, we find the same question asked and the same sign given:

And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test Him they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So He left them and departed. When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. Jesus said to them, "Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." And they began discussing it among themselves, saying, "We brought no bread." But Jesus, aware of this, said, "O you of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand [in the physical portion of Matthew's Gospel], and how many baskets you gathered? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand [in the spiritual portion of Matthew], and how many baskets you gathered? How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied,

"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are [*Petros*], and on this [*petra*] I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Then He strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that He was the Christ. (Matt 16:1–20)

In the physical portion of the doubled sign of thought-couplet construction of the narrative is the *red sky*, one sign used to two contexts with two distinct meanings. When there is a *red sky* going into darkness, there will be fair weather, smooth sailing. When there is a *red sky* going into daylight, there will be storms, trials, and tribulations. So the meaning of the sign is dependent upon the context in which the sign occurs—and this messaging needs to be carried over to the *sign of Jonah*.

The spiritual-physical portion of the doubled sign has Jesus warning His disciples to beware of the leavening of Pharisees and Sadducees, both of whom placed importance on “surface purity” rather than on spiritual substance.

The *sign of Jonah* remains the subject of the passage even when it doesn’t seem to be; for Jesus asks His disciples who do people say the Son of Man is, the physical-spiritual portion of the sign ... the disciples’ answers are all over the place. So Jesus focuses his question, “Who do you say that I am?” Peter answers, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus identifies Peter as *Simon Bar-Jonah*, saying that flesh and blood—physical men—had not revealed that knowledge to Peter, but rather God the Father had.

Peter is not the son of Jonah; Jesus knows that Peter is not the son of Jonah. The author of Matthew’s Gospel knows that Peter is not the son of Jonah ... Peter is the son of John (John 1:42; 21:15–17).

But in the context of God the Father having revealed knowledge to Peter, the difference between **John** [which has aspiration or breath preceding the nasal consonant <n> as highlighted] and **Jonah** [which has aspiration behind the nasal consonant <n> that serves as a representation of the nose] is significant, especially when this difference is reinforced by Matthew’s Jesus adding, “You are *Petros* [uttered by exhaled or spent breath through pursed lips] and on this *petra* [uttered by opening the mouth and inhaling a new breath from about the middle of the mouth] I will build my assembly.”

In going from John to Jonah, breath visibly moves from in front of the nose [from breathing through the mouth] to behind the nose—to about where a whale’s blowhole is located. In moving from *Petros* to *petra*, breath is audibly moved from being exhaled through the mouth [again, spent or dead breath] to being inhaled [new breath] through an opening mouth.

This movement of breath from where a man breathes to where a whale breathes adds another dimension to the *sign of Jonah*; for with this movement, Jonah inside the whale was dead and was resurrected to life while still inside the whale:

Then Jonah prayed to [*YHWH*] his God from the belly of the fish, saying, "I called out to [*YHWH*], 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 [*YHWH*] my God. (Jonah 2:1–6 emphasis added)

In symbolism, Jonah represents the inner self of a human person and the whale represents the fleshly body ... at human birth, the inner self is dead, but is raised to life through the indwelling of the spirit of Christ in the disciple while this inner self continues to dwell in a fleshly body.

Jesus will build His Church on the movement of breath from the nose to where the spirit/breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the bodily form of a dove landed on and entered into the man Jesus—about where the blowhole of a whale is located.

Spiritually, the *sign of Jonah* is about the resurrection of the inner self of a human person while this person continues to dwell in a fleshly body that is to this non-physical inner self as a whale's body is to a human person who should not be able to live inside the whale.

Herbert Armstrong never understood the spiritual portion of the sign of Jonah. He understood the physical portion, that Jesus would be three days and three nights—there is no ambiguity in the Hebrew—in the heart of the earth as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale. But that is all he understood. He didn't understand that a sign is context dependent, that the sign of Jonah going into the darkness represented by the death of the Body of Christ is as a red sky at dusk, but the sign of Jonah going into the light represented by dominion over the single kingdom of this world being taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man is as a red sky at dawn ... the Tribulation will afford disciples rough sailing for seven years.

In Matthew's Gospel, the transition from physical to spiritual occurs between scenes:

[End of the physical portion of Matthew occurs with this scene:] Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat." He answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' But you say, 'If anyone tells his father or his mother, "What you would have gained from me is given to God," he need not honor his father.' So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: "'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'" And He called the people to Him and said to them, "Hear and understand: it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person." Then the disciples came and said to Him, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit." But Peter said to him, "Explain the parable to us." And He said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone." And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. (Matt 15:1–21)

Leave them be. Leave Jews or Muslims or other Christians alone. They are physically minded, carnally minded, and as such are blind guides, leading blind followers, with both guide and follower sure to fall into theological ditches. They are plants that must be uprooted, pulled from where they grow. And this will be what the Second Passover is about, what the seven endtime years of tribulation are about—uprooting every ideology that is not of God. For with God, there is no tolerance of *other*. Remember what the

demonic spirit told Eliphaz: *Even in his servants he puts no trust, and his angels he charges with error* (Job 4:18) ... why would the spirit say this? Because iniquity was found in an anointed guardian cherub, this iniquity being of the sort Korah and his friends committed when they became advocates for representational democracy:

Now Korah the son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men. And they rose up before Moses, with a number of the people of Israel, 250 chiefs of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men. They assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and [YHWH] is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of [YHWH]?" (Num 16:1-3)

What did Korah say that was wrong? Was not all in the congregation holy?

Now therefore, if you [Israel] will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you [Moses] shall speak to the people of Israel. (Ex 19:5-6)

But who had exalted Moses and Aaron above others? The Lord had. Not Moses, not Aaron. And who will exalt the two witnesses during the 1260 days of the Affliction [while the Adversary remains the prince of this world]? The Lord will ... God works through one "man," what Armstrong taught, but that "man" is Christ Jesus, not any human person. So for any humanly born person in the 20th-Century or 21st-Century to teach that God works only through one man at a time is ludicrous. Will not God work through *two* witnesses, both of whom are foreshadowed by Moses and Aaron?

How tolerant of dissent was Moses or was the Lord? How tolerant of dissent will the Lord be in the future? Consider what is told *Philadelphia*, one of seven differing endtime fellowships:

Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. (Rev 3:9)

Philadelphia doesn't "convert" unbelieving Christians; doesn't make unbelieving Christians bow down at *Philadelphia's* feet. The Lord does. So *leave them be*. Don't direct missionary efforts at the 10-40 window. Don't even attempt to convert or correct other Sabbatarian Christians. Such correcting is the job of the glorified Christ. Permit Him to do His work—He really doesn't need your or even my help.

Matthew's Gospel turns on Jesus asking Peter if he was still without understanding (Matt 15:16) and Jesus explaining a straight forward metaphor to Peter: *what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person*, for the "person" isn't the fleshly body that can be washed with water. The person is the inner self that has no hands to be washed; the inner self whose life is not sustained by physical breath. And so begins the spiritual portion of Matthew's Hebraically structured Gospel:

[The spiritual portion of Matthew begins with this scene:] And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely oppressed by a demon." But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and begged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying out after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before Him, saying, "Lord, help me." And He answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even

the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly. (Matt 15:22–28)

The good news that was to first go to Israel indeed went to Israel—and what became of this good news going to Israel? The Pharisees were offended.

Today, January 2015, the good news that was to go to spiritual Israel has indeed gone to the remnants and splinters of Sabbatarian Christendom—and what has become of this good news? Sabbatarian Christians are offended, with very few exceptions.

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This piece of writing started with the intention of being a short article that answered a specific question for the adult grandson of a longtime supporter who has, since this piece was undertaken a week ago, taken offense at the prospect of me *dishonoring* Herbert Armstrong. However, this piece is not going to be short; this article will become part of the history of *Philadelphia*. It's already the length of a short book, and it grows daily. Therefore, it will be published on-line in installments, with the installments gathered into a book when complete. As such, the next installment will be forthcoming after other work is done.

This piece will continue with additional questions of textual fallacy that Herbert Armstrong didn't realize.

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