

September 29, 2004

## **An Open Letter to:**

Mr. Eric M. Mason  
c/o Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary  
Doctor of Ministry program

Re: Church Planting in Philly

Mr. Mason:

It was a pleasure to speak with you last evening. I applaud your intention to plant a fellowship in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I applaud your intention to teach disciples to live what each disciple professes. I applaud your intention to believe the words of Christ Jesus, and not denominational dogma. However, de-emphasizing eschatology will leave you and the disciples you will pastor as children of promise who haven't valued your birthright enough not to trade it for a bowl of porridge, will leave you as Esau was before God.

The Apostle Paul writes to gentile converts in Rome:

But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. For this is what the promise said: "About this time next year I will return and Sarah shall have a son." And not only so, but also when Rebecca had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad— in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of call— she was told, "The older will serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." (Rom 9:6–13 English Standard Version, used throughout)

Ishmael was a child of bondage, the son of Hagar, and allegorically represented the circumcised nation at the time of Christ (Gal 4:22–31). Isaac was the son of promise and represented "the Jerusalem above that is free" (*v.* 26). And the circumcised nation, with exceptions, was rejected because of its unbelief. The circumcised nation had the law of God, given to them through Moses, but none of that nation, at the time of Christ, kept that law (John 7:19). Yet, the law was never far from that nation, nor too hard to keep (Deu 30:11); for that nation had experienced the blessings of obedience, and the cursing of disobedience. That nation had gone into captivity, and had— in Daniel's prayer of repentance (Den 9:3–19)— turned to God and sought to return to living by the righteousness that comes from faith (Rom 6:8).

The Apostle Paul's law of faith (Rom 3:27) becomes his righteousness that comes from faith when he cites the second covenant mediated by Moses on the plains of Moab (Deu 29:1), a covenant made in addition to the Sinai Covenant and made with the uncircumcised children of the nation that left bondage to Pharaoh (compare Rom 10:6–8 with Deu 30:11–14). Under this second covenant, after the blessings and curses delineated in chapter 29

occur, circumcision of the heart and soul [or mind — *naphesh*] was offered to this then uncircumcised nation (Deu 30:6). This spiritual circumcision was conditioned upon the nation returning to keeping the commandments and statutes of God with all their heart and with all their soul while in foreign lands (*vv.* 1–2).

When the mediator of the second covenant changed from Moses to Christ Jesus, better promises were added. Under Moses, circumcision of the heart and mind, a euphemistic expression for receiving the Breath of God (*Pneuma 'Agion*) as Abram and Sari had received this Breath when their names were changed to Abraham and Sarah, followed demonstrated obedience to God. Under Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit is received prior to demonstrated obedience. Birth from above through receipt of the Holy Spirit comes while the person is still mentally a son of disobedience. Decision theology is incorrect. God the Father draws a person (John 6:44, 65) while the person is yet a son of disobedience. This person's old man or self, like the nation of Israel in Egypt, is mentally liberated from bondage to sin through the cross. However, this person's old self must die the slow death of the cross because of his or her unbelief that became disobedience (compare Heb 3:19 through 4:6 with Num 14:11–12, 40–41) or sin.

The cross doesn't kill immediately. A person through his or her physical strength will live for a day or longer, but the person will not come down from the cross alive. The person was as good as dead when raised on the cross.

Like the uncircumcised children of the nation that left Egypt who were born and who dwelt in the booths of their parents for up to forty years, the Apostle Paul's new man or creature is born in and grows in the same tabernacle or booth as the old man possessed in his (or her) Wilderness of Sin, the reason for Christians to observe the Feast of Tabernacles. Even Moses died in the Wilderness— he died with or as the last of the nation that left Egypt. Joshua led the uncircumcised children across the Jordan. Jesus, as the spiritual reality of Joshua, leads the Apostle Paul's new creature that dwells in and has dwelt in the same fleshly tabernacle as the old man across a spiritual Jordan River. So Moses pertains to the old man as Jesus pertains to the new man. And the law of God was always outside of the old man. Moses' tent of meeting (Exod 33:7–11) was outside of the congregation. God was, after Israel left Sinai, always outside of the camp of the nation. And the second covenant mediated by Moses was not given to uncircumcised Israel until the equivalent of Abraham being 99 years old, until the nation had left the Wilderness of Sin and was ready to enter God's rest.

The above is a great mystery that the Church hasn't understood. The tendency has been for the teachers of the spiritual nation to perceive the crucifixion of the old self with Christ as an instantaneous death. Thus, the continued lawlessness of this old self in the fleshly tabernacle in which the new self has been born from above was not understood, even by the Apostle Paul (Rom chptr 7). This continued lawlessness has been excused through some variation of teaching that disciples are no longer under the law, that disciples do not have to keep the law of God that has been written on hearts and minds, but are free to erase this law that would have them living as spiritual Judeans.

No, disciples are not now under an eternalized law, for their hearts and minds have become the internalized tablets of flesh upon which the laws of God are written. But disciples— the Apostle Paul's new man or creature— share the booth or tabernacle in which they dwell with the crucified old man who keeps hanging around, alive through the law of sin and death that continues to dwell in the flesh (Rom 7:25). The new man is the ark of the covenant that resides in the temple of God; disciples are the temples of God (1 Cor 3:16–17 & 2 Cor 6:16). But the circumcised nation that left Egypt along with the uncircumcised

children born after crossing the Sea of Reeds entered the tabernacle in the wilderness that corresponded to the temple in Jerusalem. However, only the high priest on Atonement could enter the Holy of Holies where the ark of the covenant and the Mercy Seat were. Spiritually, the veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the sanctuary was ripped with Jesus' death on Calvary. The old man at Calvary was nailed to the cross and can no longer enter the sanctuary, so there is no longer a need for the veil.

The parents of the uncircumcised nation that crossed the Jordan were rejected because of unbelief (Heb 3:19). God through the Psalmist says, "For forty years I loathed that generation and said, 'They are a people who go astray in their heart, and they have not known my ways.' Therefore I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest'" (Ps 95:10–11). So both the writer of Hebrews and the Psalmist link the geographical landscape of greater Judea [i.e., the promised land] with the rest of God, this rest not a physical location but a spiritual location and a spiritual mindset. The rest of God is of *the Jerusalem above that is free*.

The rest of God belongs to the children of promise— and among the children of promise (i.e., of the children of the Jerusalem that is above) represented by Isaac, the elder was hated but the younger God loved even before either had symbolically done good or evil. These two sons of promise are represented by the ten virgins, five wise and five foolish, in the parable Jesus told in His Olivet prophecy. In this parable, the Bridegroom, based upon the amount of oil in the virgins' lamps, lets five into the marriage feast and says to the other five, "'Truly, I say to you, 'I do not know you'" (Matt 25:12). All ten are virgins, or children of the promise. No sin is imputed to any of the ten, just as in the womb neither Esau nor Jacob had any sin imputed to them. Yet Jacob is loved— five virgins enter the marriage feast. Esau, as events in his life would demonstrate, never valued his inheritance; the five rejected virgins didn't value their wedding enough to have purchased oil in advance of the Bridegroom's arrival.

The two sons of promise are like Cain and Abel. When God had no regard for Cain's offering, Cain became angry. God said to Cain, "'Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it'" (Gen 4:6–7). No sin or lawlessness had yet been imputed to Cain. If Cain had done well, he would have been accepted by God just as Abel was accepted.

There were two Adams, the first physical, the last a life-giving spirit (1 Cor 15:45). From a wound in the side of the first Adam, Eve was created on the sixth day of a seven day creation week (Gen 1:27 — compare Gen 2:18–22). The creation of Adam outside Eden, with Adam there receiving the breath of life (Gen 2:7), the placing of Adam in Eden, Adam's naming of the animals, and the creation of Eve— all occur before Elohim rests. Likewise, spiritually, the Breath of the Father descending on Jesus as a dove (Matt 3:16), Jesus entering the Jerusalem temple and naming the animals (*Hypocrites, vipers* — Matt chptr 23), and the creation of the last Eve (John 20:22) from a wound in His side— all occur before the glorified Jesus sits down at the right hand of the Father. Thus, the seventh day of the creation week foreshadows Jesus sitting down at the right hand of the Father. The seventh day of the creation week foreshadows the seventh day of a spiritual creation week when Jesus rests from bearing the sins of Israel.

As the first Eve in the temptation account believes the serpent that she would not die (Gen 3:4), the last Eve also believed the Dragon that deceives the whole world (Rev 12:9) that she would not die. The first Eve took to herself the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. She never ate of the Tree of Life (Gen 3:22). The Apostle Paul's old man has

only the life that comes from physical breath; this old man is no different than a beast (Eccl 3:18–20). This old man does not have an immortal soul that receives regeneration. This is the lie the last Eve swallowed. Rather, the old man will die in a wilderness of sin because of unbelief, or this old man will be crucified at Calvary. Either way, this old man must die— and as long as this old man lives, he remains under Moses regardless of whether he is a natural branch or a wild branch grafted onto the rootstock of righteousness. Only the new man born from above through receipt of the Holy Spirit and ruled by the law of God written on his (or her) heart and mind is not under Moses, but is lead by the spiritual Joshua across the Jordan and on to glorification.

Returning to Paul: not all who have spiritually descended from Israel belong to Israel, and of the children of promise, born of the last Eve, the first must do well to be accepted; the second is called righteous. Eschatology is about which child of promise is which— and why. A spiritual Cain will kill his brother during the first half of seven years of tribulation. The *why* is in the taking of the sacraments: the greater Christian Church does not cover its sins by taking the Passover when and how Jesus set the example. Its offering will not be accepted, thereby requiring that it physically walk blameless before God to be accepted. The first Cain could not do this. The last Cain will not do this, but will murder his brother and will be marked for death from above.

You, as a future teacher of the spiritual nation of Israel, need to begin living as a spiritual Judean, what the Apostle Peter taught gentile converts to do (Gal 2:14 — Paul didn't condemn what Peter taught, but Peter's hypocrisy of separating himself from his disciples when the circumcision faction came from Jerusalem). The old man in you lives either under Moses or lives as a son of disobedience; the new man lives under the spiritual Joshua. The old man has been nailed to the cross, but he isn't yet dead until you are liberated from the law of sin and death that continues to dwell in your members. This will happen. And this is the event that will begin seven years of tribulation. Death angels will again pass through the land slaying firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God. The sorrow you have experienced will be needlessly felt by far too many Christians on the morning after. This sorrow will be felt because they didn't believe God enough to take the sacraments as Jesus set the example.

I write because I believe that you have a spirit about you that hasn't callused in denominationalism, that you sincerely seek to disciple those whom the Father has drawn and will draw. Therefore, understand, the Sabbath as God's rest here on earth will mark those who are of God during the first half of the Tribulation as the mark of the beast will distinguish those who are of the antiChrist during the second half of the Tribulation.

You have more study before you. I remain here to serve you in any way that I can.

Respectfully,  
Homer Kizer