

January 15, 2004
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Commentary -- From the Margins The Real American Idol

With passing acknowledgment of a television program capitalizing on America's fascination with entertainers and the entertainment industry, no image, logo, or icon is more widely recognized than the empty cross. None will be more recognized for a generation. But the generation will pass. The age will not continue as it has. A new age will come, one marked by a changed human nature, a *nature* not fascinated with or terrified by death.

A culture that celebrates youth is also a culture that fears death.

I was drafted to reread biblical prophecies two years ago. One year ago to the day or very close, I first realized that the history of circumcised Israel was the visible, physical shadow of spiritual Israel's history in the invisible, spiritual realm. That revelation by realization fueled a year of writing about typology, and liberated typological exegesis from the clutches of tenured academics. The sealed visions of Daniel became readily understandable and teachable. Using typology as a tool, biblical prophecies became a seamless narrative about bringing many heirs of God to glory. Typology provided the logic for why the endtime gospel about patient endurance must be proclaimed to the world before the end of the age comes. It also revealed a second Passover slaughter of firstborns, spiritual and physical, not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God. From the perspective of a year-end review, typology was the biggest news of the year. It shaped dozens of articles and essays as the good news *that all who endure to the end shall be saved* (Matt 24:13) was proclaimed on the worldwide web at least as loudly as the gospel of Christ's Millennium reign was proclaimed on radio post World War II.

In November, Google's Florida update of how it ranks or indexes Web sites introduced the necessity of reworking the sites that were proclaiming the Philadelphia Church's gospel of patient endurance (Rev 3:10). Google's adjustment of search engine rankings came just as revelation was coming that all of humanity has been and will be killed by the cross, that the two lawbreakers crucified with Jesus on Calvary represent the entirety of humanity in the day of each person's judgment. All human beings have sinned, and are spiritually as those two thieves were physically. Thus, in the judgment of an individual who says, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us" (Luke 23:39), Christ will deny the person. Jesus has already said, "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matt 10:39), in the same dialogue where He first introduces the gospel of patient endurance (*v.* 22). It will be the person who acknowledges the justice of his or her death, and asks only that Jesus remembers the person who will be saved (Luke 23:40-43). Jesus' use of *this day*, or *today*, references the day of the person's resurrection (or lifting up) to judgment. And the two crosses on which the two lawbreakers hung, like the cross on which Jesus hung, represent death, not resurrection.

The Apostle Paul assures disciples that the day of the Lord has not come (2 Thess 2:1-3), that those who belong to Christ will be resurrected at His coming (1 Cor 15:23), that judgment of disciples will not be revealed before the Lord comes (1 Cor 4:5). Thus, the one lawbreaker, his judgment revealed, either preceded Jesus to glory--which is not the case--or symbolically represents the division of humanity that will be glorified on the last day. Since no person was going to come down from a Roman cross alive, the cross cannot represent resurrection, or life beyond death, but rather, the cross represents death itself. For the cross allowed the crucified person to live for a short while after the person was as good as dead--legal death came with being raised on the cross. The

date on which the crucified person actually expired was immaterial, for suffocation could take a day or more.

Thus, Google's Florida dance introduced a delay in correcting a literary liberty: even in recent articles and essays, I have referred to the first horseman of Revelation chapter 6 as the man of perdition. I know better, and have known better for most of the past two years, but I have been careless in this assignment of identity. The four horsemen are the four horns that spring up when the great horn of the spiritual king of Greece is broken (Dan chptrs 8 & 11) at the second Passover. The man of perdition is the little horn that emerges on the northern horn, or on the head of the fourth beast of Daniel chapter 7. The body of this fourth beast is given over to be burned by the Ancient of Days (Dan 7:11-12), when dominion is taken from the four beasts. But the other three beasts are allowed to live for a season and a time. They are the amalgamated first beast of Revelation 13. The head that has received the mortal wound is of the fourth beast, whose body, again, has been given over to be burned. So when Satan is cast to earth and comes as the true antiChrist, Satan makes an image of this beast's destroyed body. And it is the mark of this beast, or the mark of the image of this beast that all who would buy and sell must bear. That mark is *Chi xi stigma*, or the tattoo [*stigma*] of Xx [*Chi xi*]. So the appearance of the fourth beast of Daniel 7 is as Xx, or as Christ's cross.

The first beast of Daniel 7 is the false prophet, and the fourth beast is cross-shaped. His name is Death (Rev 6:8). And once the Tribulation begins, he is given authority to kill a fourth of humanity.

The fourth beast is the spiritual king of the North--and north doesn't represent the geographical direction of God's throne, but Death, personified. When Christ sets His hand to recover Israel from the north country (Jer 16:14-15), He liberates Israel from bondage to sin, or from the death penalty that comes with sin.

From the second Passover liberation of spiritual Israel from mental bondage to sin to the middle of seven years of tribulation, humanity will be rocked by death. Typology reveals that a third of the Christian Church will die the night of the second Passover because the greater Church refuses to take the Passover as Christ established the example. In addition, the firstborns of the other half of the world will die, so the death toll for that one night could well be a third of humanity. Now add to this carnage that once the four horsemen emerge as world reigning kings, another fourth of the earth has been given to Death over the next time, times, and half a time. Then just before the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Messiah, on day 1335, another third of humanity is again killed by angels released by God. And we can begin to see what Jesus said that if these days were not cut short, no human being would be saved alive (Matt 24:22). The human over-population problem will be supernaturally addressed in a most decisive way.

But why? Why kill so many human beings? Because humanity will not quit worshiping demons, idols, and the works of its hands (Rev 9:20).

All of the above deaths could be avoided if human beings would hear the words of Jesus and believe the One who raised Him from the dead. Jesus quotes the prophet Zechariah about striking the shepherd and the sheep will scatter (Matt 26:31). He identified Himself as that shepherd. And the remainder of that prophecy in Zechariah says, "I [the Lord] will turn my hand against the little ones. / In the whole land, declares the Lord, / two thirds shall be cut off and perish, / and one third shall be left alive" (Zech 13:7-8). And a little quick math will reveal that if a third of humanity is killed in the second Passover, then a fourth of the remaining two thirds is killed (leaving half of humanity), then if a third of the remainder is killed, what is left is one third of humanity left alive, exactly the percentage Zechariah prophesies.

Does that scare you? It should if you worship the Christianity of the Cross. For the principle demon worshiped by Western culture is the Cross. The idol worshiped is the image of the Cross.

And the works of human hands worshiped is the youth culture that attempts to physically hide from Death, a.k.a. the Cross.

Google's Florida dance slowed me down enough that I could better identify this fourth beast of Daniel 7--it put me back on a schedule established with the foundations of the universe. I read, last night, in the pages of a slick-paper magazine published by one of the splinters of the former Radio Church of God that God was running out of patience with errant humanity. That is not the case. A farmer doesn't run out of patience with his or her barley crop. The farmer might lose patience with flocks of migrating snow geese that devour the barley before it can be harvested, or the farmer might lose patience with an infestation of moles that bore tunnels under the crop's roots. But the early barley crop takes six thousand years to ripen. God knew that when He planted the crop. He is not now suddenly surprised when gays want to marry, or when the Evangelical Church worships the empty cross in a manner similar to how the Roman Church worships a statue of Mary. Both faiths will deny that they worship idols, let alone a demon, but so too will the two gays that want to marry and adopt children deny that they are governed by a demon. So God is not surprised that humanity continues on a course that will necessitate killing two of every three people now alive. All of humanity will become the holy nation of Israel; all who endure to the end shall be saved. But only a third will live to the middle of seven years of tribulation. This means that humanity will experience death on a scale that is today unimaginable. Needless death. But death because few want to hear the words of Jesus and believe the One who sent Him.

However, when the Holy Spirit is poured unto all flesh (Joel 2:28) and all humanity becomes the holy nation of Israel, the harvest of the earth will have ripened (Rev 14:15). It will become time to gather the barley into the barn, and burn the tares, the grapes of the vine of the earth (vv. 17-20). The earth will be harvested on schedule and as scheduled.

The work that I do will either be ahead or behind the schedule established when the foundations of the universe were strung as many strings under great tension. During fall 2002, it seemed like I had gotten ahead of a schedule I couldn't then read. I believe I was behind that schedule in August 2003, but ahead by the middle of November.

The Florida dance will delay the appearance of the next issue of *Water & Fire*, but it will also make the next issue theologically stronger as the saints of Philadelphia fight to win a kingdom for their elder brother, a kingdom He has already won.

Brotherly love means actually fighting for Christ Jesus as David fought Goliath. The ancient Asia Minor city named Philadelphia, now named Alesehir, Arabic for "City of God," was named in honor of Attalus II, the younger brother of Eumenes II, king of Lydia. The city wasn't named to honor this king for him accommodating the enemies of his elder brother, but for him successfully fighting against those enemies, then unselfishly giving his victory to his brother. And it is to saints in the spiritual city or church named for this king that Christ Jesus begins His letter, "'I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut'" (Rev 3:8).

Philadelphia's fight is against Death, whom Christ Jesus has defeated (Rev 1:18). It is a fight won by patient endurance--by enduring in faith or belief to the end. And this is the fight the two witnesses win when it appears that Abaddon has finally defeated them. Victory for all of Israel is in overcoming the Cross in the resurrection to life for all who have done good (John 5:29). The Cross and the false prophet, the first horseman of the Apocalypse, will both be thrown into the lake of fire upon Christ's return as the Messiah. They are no match for Christ, or for disciples who fight for Christ. They are spiritually uncircumcised beasts.

Goliath asked David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" (1 Sam 17:43). Truth is, he was merely a beast regardless of how imposing he seemed to be.

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