

Commentary — From the Margins *They Came Without Passports*

Now [YHWH] said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram went, as [YHWH] had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then [YHWH] appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to [YHWH], who had appeared to him. From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to [YHWH] and called upon the name of [YHWH]. And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb. (Gen 12:1–9)

Abram came to a land that was not then his—and was not his when he died. The author of Hebrews writes, "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. (Heb 11:8–10).

By faith, Abraham left the land of Ur of the Chaldeans with his father Terah and journeyed to the land of Haran, where his father (his *old man*) remained for the remainder of his father's life, with this land of Haran probably being the land of Assyria, the land spiritually representing Death as Egypt spiritually represents Sin. ... For theological reasons, it is important that Abraham's *old man* remain in the land representing death and that Abraham is called to go to the land that typologically represents life, pass through this land and enter the land representing sin where his wife (analogous to a person's fleshly body) is taken

into Pharaoh's harem, then rejected and Abraham is ordered to leave *sin*. Abraham is given no choice about leaving. For the journeying of Abraham typologically represents the spiritual journey every Christian must take, leaving spiritual Babylon [this world] and trekking mentally to the land representing life, its boundaries being Sabbath observance.

The mental landscape representing *Life* lies inside of Sabbath observance, with Sabbath observance being analogous to the hills of Judea from which an early and a latter harvest will be gathered into barns and a tithe brought to Jerusalem as the portion that belongs to God. The early barley harvest ran from the waving of the Wave Sheaf Offering to the Feast of Weeks, with the spiritual harvest of firstfruits running from the resurrection and acceptance of Christ Jesus, the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering, to the return of Christ Jesus as the Messiah, a time period of approximately two millennia, but also a period represented by one "day," the preparation day for gathering of the firstfruits to God.

Christ Jesus is the Passover Lamb of God, this Lamb penned in Jerusalem when Jesus entered on the 10th day of the first month, the month that began with the first sighted new moon crescent following the spring equinox in the year 31 of the Common Era. Jesus was then crucified on the 14th day of this first month, and the unit for reckoning time changed and changed again. The unit went from the weekly seven day cycle that had the 14th day of the first month on Wednesday, the fourth day, to the seven day cycle of the Feast of Unleavened Bread that had Jesus resurrected and accepted by God on its fourth day, with these seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread representing the seven endtime years of tribulation, and with the single kingdom of this world being given to the Son of Man in the fourth year of these seven years, thereby giving to the glorified Jesus "all authority in heaven and on earth" (Matt 28:18). Not until the doubled day 1260 of the seven endtime years of tribulation will the glorified Jesus meet with eleven of His disciples on a mountain in the Galilee and the disciples representing these "eleven" (forming twelve named tribes) will follow the Lamb wherever He does (Rev 14:1-5).

But Calvary also represents the beginning of the Preparation Day—when Passover lambs were slain in Egypt—that is the First Unleavened (Matt 26:17 — read the verse in Greek without the extra words translators have added), a single "day" that begins with darkness and the eating of the Lamb, that continues until its midnight hour when humanity can get no farther from God, that then sees the death angel pass over the land, slaying uncovered firstborns in the Second Passover liberation of Israel. Six hours remain until dawn, with these six hours representing the reality of Israel in Egypt not leaving their homes until dawn, with these six hours taking 1260 days to pass, forty-two months, a hour equaling seven chronological months, and the twelve hours of day of this one *day* also equaling forty-two months, as time passes twice as quick for the spiritual Elisha as for the spiritual Elijah.

The light of this one long *day* is Christ Jesus, who left this world in darkness at Calvary:

So the crowd answered Him, "*We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?*" So Jesus said to them, "*The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.* While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them. (John 12:34–36 emphasis added)

The world was plunged into spiritual darkness at Calvary—and the one who spiritually walks in this darkness does not know where he or she is going, but walks as a blind person, groping for truth, for anything onto which the person can hold to keep him or herself from falling into the Abyss. Christians have been spiritually blind since the first disciples—the ones who walked in light as sons of light—died physically, with the death of John (ca 100–102 CE) marking the physical death of the spiritual Body of Christ, a Body that will be resurrected to life with the Second Passover liberation of Israel from indwelling sin and death.

Christians—including Sabbatarian Christendom—walk in this world as blind men, easily deceived by their imaginations ... in Oregon, deer season always opened on the Sabbath. Dad died shortly after I turned eleven. Mom remarried a year and a half later; married Lyle Squier, a Seventh Day Adventist I didn't then respect but came-to as I matured. I was twelve, almost thirteen when Mom remarried. And the following year when I was thirteen, a sophomore in high school, I wanted to go deer hunting opening morning, but Lyle wouldn't hunt on the Sabbath so I had to go by myself. This meant that I had a five mile walk to where I wanted to hunt.

I left the house about three in the morning. We lived a half mile up Slick Rock Creek Road, Lincoln County, Oregon. So in the dark, no flashlight, I set off hiking up the graveled Slick Rock Creek Road—and shadows loomed over the road that seemed to be alive. The moon was mostly obscured by clouds, but there was enough light for huckleberry bushes to cast shadows that seemed to be reaching out to grab me; for the shadows of fir boughs to swoop down low over the road; for the shadows of viny maples to appear as bears. Intellectually, I knew the shadows were nothing as I hurried up the road, keeping to the right and going up the overgrown homestead road that has since been replaced by New Bridge Road. I climbed to the top of a hill where an abandoned orchard still produced fruit, and I sat down, with my back against the trunk of a large apple. It was still hours before dawn—and there was a bear in the orchard with me so every shadow continued to be threatening. A doe ate windfalls between my feet (I could have touched her with my rifle barrel), but I couldn't tell if the deer was a buck or doe until the grayness of dawn dissolved the shadows, washing them away.

In the darkness of that Sabbath morning, I knew where I was going physically. I knew my destination. But imagined threats seemed very real as I fought a war in my mind, with my desire to hunt being stronger than any reason for turning back, for waiting until daylight, for waiting until tomorrow when Lyle would go out. I didn't see a buck, and it was still too dark to shoot when the bear left the orchard. So I returned home empty-handed about noon.

Since the light went out with first the death of the body of Christ then with the death of the Body of Christ, Christians have walked in darkness, not knowing where they were going, fearing shadows, fearing their imaginations, devising doctrines that were not and are not true. Christendom has turned the shadow of a huckleberry bush into the Adversary himself, when the Adversary appears as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14), as light, not as darkness. And as moths drawn to a hot light bulb, Christians have been drawn to the Adversary; for any “light” seems bright in the darkness that came with Calvary. Any light seems a refuge from the darkness. So greater Christendom has worshiped the Adversary generation after generation, century after century.

What has happened to America, now a nation afraid of its own shadow, with Blue America attempting to disarm Red America so that the imagination of Blue America doesn't fear a return to when a thirteen year old with a Mark 4 Enfield hunted deer with live ammunition rather than hunting cops in a video game; when pulling the trigger was followed by dressing the animal, getting blood on hands and forearms, jeans and boots. Real blood. And warm bowels were pulled from the body cavity, establishing the connection between pulling a trigger and the consequences of a bullet leaving the barrel. What has happened to America, now a nation terrorized by its imagination? What has happened to the nation my ancestors established as they walked in moonlight, not knowing where they were going but not fearful of a dark and bloody continent.

Today, American military sensitivity training has *Mayflower* Separatists being compared to modern illegal immigrants: *Indians did not ask them for their passports* — no, Indians tried to kill them for stealing cached corn, analogous to taking jobs from United States' nationals ... in the analogy used by these sensitivity trainers, Texans would be shooting illegal immigrants.

The firm contracted by the Pentagon to instill sensitivity into soldiers the military just spent weeks and years training to kill enemy combatants has been paid millions to teach young men and women to fear political shadows blown about by the winds of progress ... the politics of this world are the politics of spiritual Babylon, its king being the Adversary. To engage in the politics of this world is to engage with the Adversary in trying to make his kingdom a more just world. To attempt to save America fiscally is to try to keep a major player in the Adversary's kingdom afloat financially. And the essence of the Christian message is that the single kingdom of this world will be taken from the Adversary and his angels and given to the Son of Man, uncovered Head and covered Body; so the essence of Christendom is delivery of a message that the nations of this world are doomed, fated for destruction, destined to be replaced by the single kingdom of the Messiah. However, the endtime good news that is to be proclaimed to all peoples as a witness to all nations is that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13–14; 10:22). They shall be saved through simply enduring in faith because when this world is baptized into life through the spirit being poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28), every human person will have the Law written on hearts and placed in minds so that all *know the Lord* (Heb 8:10–11).

The endtime gospel is not a complicated message; is not a message open to interpretation; but is a message that reflects the fall of spiritual Babylon (the kingdom of this present world) and the dawn of a new day so that every person can see where the person walks.

My maternal grandfather, Benjamin Howland, was a direct descendant of John Howland, the *Mayflower's* cabin boy, the manservant of Governor John Carver. He stayed in America and didn't return to England; so he was there when these Separatists stole cached corn; he was there when Squanto (Tisquantum) walked into camp and spoke English to the Separatists. And because the peace-loving, kingdom-seeking Separatists carried guns and were perhaps a little too quick to shoot, a treaty was made between the Separatists and the Wampanoag Confederacy that gave to the Separatists the right to remain where they were, to hold the land they held.

My paternal grandfather, Orlando Kizer, was a direct descendant of early Mennonites. The following is from the family history:

When William Penn visited Holland and Germany, promulgating his doctrines of free religious thought in antagonism to the forms of established churches, he invited all to join him in his settlement in the new country. Accepting his ideas, Francis Daniel Pastorius of Frankfort, Germany, organized a company for taking up land and forming the settlement of Germantown, now part of this city [Philadelphia]. The Mennonites of Holland and the lower Rhine of Germany joined with him, and among those who came here was Dirck Keyser of Amsterdam. He was a manufacturer of and dealer in all kinds of silk goods, and a man of prominence, but, desiring to worship God in all freedom, he came over with his son, Pieter Dirck Keyser, in 1688. (Charles Kizer. *The Bicentennial Reunion of the Keyser Family, 1688-1888.*)

Desiring to worship God in all freedom my ancestors came to America. They came not for economic gain, not to make better lives for themselves; they came for the freedom to worship God apart from the ways God was worshiped in established churches. And today, three centuries later (almost four centuries later), the freedom to worship God has about been lost. It has certainly been lost in public venues: the Ten Commandments have been removed from courthouses and schools and unfortunately, from most churches. Americans have forgotten the lessons of the English Civil War; have forgotten that a Catholic king banned Protestants from owning firearms that were the military weapons of the day. A war was fought over whether Englishmen had the right to defend themselves, and the outcome of that civil war was that the king lost his head and Englishmen kept their guns ... as Americans, we may well see another civil war in which the king loses his head and Americans temporarily keep their guns. Yes, temporarily keep their guns; for when civil disobedience breaks out in open war, when organized society collapses because inner cities and high-density population centers cannot be fed and Americans again fight Americans, it won't be who has the guns or who has the gold that will be saved, but who worships God from inside the Promised Land represented by Sabbath observance. For the physical life of a person, of every person will be without meaning.

Returning to sensitivity training: That some foolish racist could bilk the Federal Government for millions of dollars through cultural sensitivity training seminars bothers me less than the cultural ignorance fostered in the name of multicultural education in the public school system. Which seventh-grader knows anything of the history of the Second Amendment, anything of the great debates of the 18th-Century, or of the 17th-Century. A week ago, a local banker who regularly attends Mennonite services in Pigeon, Michigan, asked me what the difference was between the Amish and the Mennonites—and I gave him more 17th-Century history than he probably wanted. But he asked the question to *get to know me* as I was asking him for a loan for a new engine lathe: he wanted to know how it was that I could be in my middle 60s and have no more assets in this world than I have. But he couldn't ask that question directly. He needed to obtain the answer to that question by an indirect means. So I answered his question: if a person's focus is on the acquisition of the things of this world, the person will acquire the things of this world. However, if a person's focus has been on the intangible things of God, the person will acquire few worldly things and will have accumulated considerable treasure in heaven ...

I was called to reread prophecy as part of the reward my ancestors received when they stored up treasure in heaven. Yes, their focus on the things of God rather than on additional acquisitions in this world cost them the things they had in this world, but a person comes into this world with nothing and leaves with the same. It is as if the person were truly grain to be consumed while here. ... My ancestors sought to store up treasure in heaven, but in doing so, they acquired a different sort of treasure in this world—

Matthew's writes,

And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Then Peter said in reply, "See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?" Jesus said to them, "*Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.* (Matt 19:23–30 emphasis added)

It has been traditionally taught that everyone who left the things of this world to seek the things of God would receive the things of this world a hundredfold as well as inherit eternal life, but this isn't what Jesus said: Jesus made houses and land the equal of family—no difference—thus in becoming part of a congregation, one family (the family left) is replaced by another family (the congregation). The

house left behind is replaced by a spiritual house, a body of spirit. Yet the promise of Jesus to receive a hundredfold still seems unfulfilled.

Consider my ancestors: did they receive a hundredfold blessings? What is the ancestry of FDR; of President Bush (father and son)?

What does it mean to receive a hundredfold?

I have two younger brothers, one a Christian of high ethical character, the other of perhaps even higher ethical character. Neither have been the outlaw I was. But as the eldest, I am the one who belonged to God from birth, the one who opened the womb, the one who would've been redeemed in ancient Israel—or burned with fire. So for me, much of what I write is, indeed, personal. And I am the one called to reread prophecy, thereby doing a work that is necessarily iconoclastic; for included in Scripture is a Sophist novel, a false biography, and three false epistles. In the form the New Testament was received at the beginning of the 21st-Century, the New Testament was in need of serious reevaluation, something even Pope Benedict XVI recognized when writing about Christendom's traditional manger birth scene not being found in Scripture.

In a way, me being called to do the work of rereading prophecy is an earthly "reward" that comes to my ancestors that left Holland for the new world in the 17th-Century. It will be the completion of the work they began, completion of returning the Body of Christ to its 1st-Century roots.

So tell, what has happened to America, a nation terrorized by the shadow of black rifles and oversized magazines? What has happened to the nation that trekked westward in economic darkness, not knowing where it was going, reinventing Capitalism as it went? What happened to individual rights and the freedom to worship God as a person desired? Am I not free to do as my stepfather did, sit out opening day of deer season? Am I not free to shun doctors and the medical establishment? Am I not free to purchase those things that are of benefit to me, with a health insurance policy being of no benefit to me? Am I not as free as my Amish neighbors who received exemption from Obamacare? When my ancestors came to the new world, they were as free as the followers of Jakob Ammann (1656–1730) ... what has since happened? Not anything I am happy about; for the end of the United States of America will contribute mightily to the fall of Babylon. Religious persecution will return, and many Sabbatarians will be martyred. It can be no other way.

The Christian who prays for *God's kingdom to come* doesn't really understand for what the person prays. The transition from this present age to the coming of the Kingdom will be the most difficult years humans have ever lived-through—and most humans will not make it through these seven years. The world's population at the end of these seven years will be no more than 1.4 billion, and may be as few as 700 million, a tithe of a tithe of the world's present population.

Death will no longer be the shadow of life, but the reality of life as we know it.

The present debate in the United States about gun violence and the Second Amendment is a political issue that I would have ignored for the first forty years after baptism: for I have already lived through this debate in 1968, the year when

Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King were murdered, this following the 1965 murder of Malcolm X [born Malcolm Little] and the 1963 murder of John F. Kennedy (I was then a college freshman at Willamette University, Salem, Oregon).

The issue of gun deaths is doubly personal: in October 1963, Mom leaned over the muzzle of my military surplus, .30-06 Springfield (I had traded the Mark 4 Enfield for the Springfield), and she pulled the trigger with her thumb, splattering lungs and spine all over the ceiling ... a few days before her suicide, I had a feeling that I needed to hide the ammo for my rifle, and before returning to my dorm room from a weekend hunting trip to the Ochoco Mountains, I hid the ammo I had for the rifle in the bottom of the cardboard box in which I kept my old clothes at home: I put the ammo in the sleeve of a yellow sweatshirt, rolled the sweatshirt up and rolled it in a couple of pair of jeans, again for reasons that I didn't understand. But obviously, I didn't hide the ammo well enough.

From where did that feeling to hide the ammo come? The feeling was strong, but unfocused.

In June 1968—I then had a gunshop, had one for more than a year—simply owning a gun made a person a second class citizen ... and the NRA [National Rifle Association] went to work to return gun owners to being first class citizens. Some politicians had to go. Oregon's longtime senator Wayne Morris (R) lost his primary election to Bob Packwood over one issue, Morris' softness when it came to supporting the Second Amendment.

There are few issues worthy of fighting a civil war: for Americans, the right to protect oneself—a right over which the English Civil War (1642–1651 CE) was fought—is such an issue. If the Second Amendment is lost, the entirety of the U.S. Constitution is lost. The Second Amendment is the teeth in the Constitution, that which prevents heavy handed governance.

If the U.S. Constitution is lost, freedom of religion is also lost ... with Obamacare, freedom of religion has already been lost.

My ancestors passively fought Church & State. They didn't bear arms against the State: that is for those who want to replace one form of Adversarial governance for another. Instead, they kept low profiles while continuing to practice *Believers' Baptism*, rejecting all forms of professing allegiance to the governing entities of this world. And so will again be done as the long break in hostilities comes to an end.

The U.S. Constitution is not a divinely inspired document; it is not of God but is, rather, of men, and of not particularly godly men. For there is nothing godly about mingling the sacred and the profane, the secular and the divine. There is nothing godly about a nation attempting to enter into the presence of God on the day after the Sabbath [*te mia ton Sabbaton*] rather than on the Sabbath. There is nothing godly about applying freedom of religion to the mind but not to the body, the reality of the First Amendment.

Regardless of whether a person wants to accept the reality that all authority in this present world comes through the Adversary, the still reigning prince of this world, the truth that must be faced when engaging in the forthcoming civil war is

that until Christ Jesus is given dominion over the single kingdom of this world halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation, every governing authority in this world is of the Adversary, including that of the United States of America. The winning side of a civil war simply establishes or reestablishes the governance of the Adversary over the person. Faces change, but fates do not. If a person wonders why newly elected politicians do the very same things that the politicians voted out of office did, it is because all governance continues to come through the Adversary.

In 1968, I made a conscious decision to move away from modern weaponry and to shoot and to build historic firearms. Initially, I focused on pre-1898 singleshot rifles, but within a year, I was building and shooting muzzleloading firearms. Then after relocating to Alaska's Kenai Peninsula in 1974, I became too busy repairing outboards and chainsaws to continue building long guns.

Now back to the banker who couldn't ask what he needed to know to determine whether he would approve a loan for a new engine lathe: why would a member of a Mennonite congregation—the banker—not know the history of Anabaptists and Radical Reformers in the 16th-Century, then the history of Mennonites in the 17th-Century? What is being taught to parishioners? Certainly not their own history, and apparently not much Scripture. For the banker who left a Methodist fellowship because there were no young people the age of his daughters in the fellowship and began to attend the Mennonite fellowship because there were teenagers in that fellowship, church attendance wasn't/isn't a matter of seeking religious freedom. What church he attends is of less importance than who else also attends the fellowship, a damning position if he were called by God. Luckily for him, at this time he is not called. He is, as far as I know, an honorable person who is of this world. But he is a *Christian* in name only. He is a *Christian* as America's founding fathers were. And while I found him to be charming, I felt great sadness that such a person would attend a fellowship based on *Believers' baptism*. What has happened in three hundred years? Have the faithful gotten tired of waiting for Christ to return, and have become what their ancestors fled?

If a person looks at a map of the Middle East, there is very little land west of the Jordan River, and a lot of land east of the Jordan, south of the Jordan, north of the Jordan. It is that small parcel of land west of the Jordan that typologically represents Sabbath observance and life. The land itself is physical. Spiritual life is not. So it matters not a whit if a person physically dwells in this miniscule parcel of land representing Sabbath observance and life—less land than found on Kodiak Island, endearingly dubbed, *the Rock*. It matters a great deal, though, whether a Christian undergoes the mental trek from the kingdom of spiritual Babylon (the kingdom of this world) to the *Land Beyond the River*, Sabbath observance. Then once inside of Sabbath observance, it matters whether a person will go to Jerusalem three times a year to appear before the Lord where He has placed His name.

An engine lathe is a thing of this world. Acquisition of a lathe is an appropriate subject for discussion with a banker, but much more time was spent

discussing the 17th-Century than the lathe, suggesting that the lathe itself was of little importance and that is true. A new snowmachine would cost twice as much.

Whether the United States collapses fiscally this year or in twenty years doesn't matter in the greater scheme of things. The nation will collapse, that is the given. But whether an American remains free to worship God as the American chooses is important and is worthy of civil disobedience. This was the decision my ancestors made. It is my decision. For I am entitled to the same rights and privileges as my Amish neighbors, who have been Mennonite converts for less time than my ancestors.

The battle for equal rights has been joined.

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