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Commentary — From the Margins *Against Dispensationalism*

The vision given John on the isle of Patmos concludes with Jesus saying, *Surely I come quickly* (Rev 22:20), but Jesus did come quickly—and with His delay, doubts about the authenticity of the vision entered into 2nd-Century theology. These doubts came from there being seven actual churches on an Asia Minor mail route, and from increasing lawlessness entering the Church, thereby further concealing rather than revealing the plan of God. By drifting away from keeping the Sabbaths of God, knowledge of this plan was lost. Because meaning is assigned to words, by not keeping the Sabbaths the increasingly Hellenistic Church could not place in context what John meant when he wrote that he was in vision on the Lord's day (Rev 1:10). A day of the physical week was assigned as the linguistic object to the icon *Lord's day* instead of a day in a spiritual creation week that begins with the light of men coming from darkness (John 1:4-5; 12:35-36, 46 & 2 Cor 4:6). The lawlessness of the Hellenistic Church was true rebellion against God, and rebellion of even greater magnitude than that of both houses of circumcised Israel when those nations burned their firstborns to Molech (Ezek 20:24-26 — note: because of Israel's lawlessness, the Lord gave Israel statutes by which the nation *should not* live; He made them desolate).

Teaching newly born-of-Spirit disciples to erase the laws of God written on hearts and minds through receipt of the Holy Breath [*Pneuma 'Agion*] of God causes their infants to commit spiritual suicide. Their *antinomian* teachers, whom Jesus will deny when judgments are revealed (Matt 7:21-23), have consigned these infants to the lake of fire. These *antinomian* teachers toss born-anew infant sons of God into ever-burning fire as the reality foreshadowed by the natural nation of Israel sacrificing their firstborns to Molech. And they do this with the same zeal as the natural nation killed its firstborns...shame on these teachers of iniquity who, in Jesus' name, do great works. Shame on these super-apostles who are false ministers of righteousness (2 Cor 11:13-15), false prophets (Matt 24:5, 11), false teachers who make merchandize of infant sons of God (2 Pet 2:1-3), selling them in spiritual Babylon's meat markets.

Grace is the garment of Christ Jesus' righteousness that, when a disciple *puts on Christ* (Gal 3:27), causes no sin to be imputed to, or reckoned to the disciple in the same way that no sin was reckoned to all men [humanity] until Sinai (Rom 5:13). Grace is a garment like a cloak. It is not a license to poach the fruits of lawlessness while standing in the garden of God. It is not a pardon from lawlessness in the heavenly realm. It is Christ Jesus bearing those sins in a far land in the same way that the sins of natural Israel were read over the head of the Azazel goat before this goat was lead into the wilderness by the hand of a fit man (Lev 16:5, 9-10, 15, 21-22).

Jesus' death at Calvary paid the death penalty for every transgression of the law in the natural realm; no sin in this natural realm is now spiritually reckoned against any human being. But this doesn't mean that every human being is now saved. Far from that; for the waters of humanity have been divided between those born-from-above [born of water and of Spirit — John 3:5] and those who only have physical life. Those individuals presently born-from-above have actual life in the heavenly realm: they are

the firstfruits, represented by the early barley harvest of Judean hillsides. And because they have life in the heavenly realm, they can sin in this heavenly realm...Jesus will not again be crucified for sin; He will not die in the heavenly realm to pay the death penalty attached to the sins that He bears as He covers disciples with the garment of His righteousness. Rather, He will either give those sins to Satan when He returns, or He will return them to the disciple who committed them. Either Satan will pay with his life for those sins—and Satan will pay with his spiritual life as Jesus paid with His physical life—or the son of God will pay with his. The death penalty will be paid; it will not be waved. And hypocrisy determines who pays: the son of God who willfully sins when this son of God knows to do right is not deceived, and will die the second death for his willfulness. The son of God who strives to walk uprightly before God will have his lawlessness given to Satan when his judgment is revealed; this son passes from death to everlasting life.

But walking uprightly before God will cause the disciple to live by the laws of God that have been written on the heart and placed in the mind—and these laws are physically codified in the commandments uttered from atop Sinai. Walking uprightly means keeping all of the commandments, especially the least of the commandments (Matt 5:19), the Sabbath commandment. For when moving from physical to spiritual, the commandment against murder, what a person does with his or her hand, moves inward to become a commandment against being angry with one's brother (Matt 5:21-22). The commandment against adultery, what a person does with his or her body, moves inward to become a commandment against thinking lustful thoughts (*vv.* 27-28). The Sabbath commandment that governed what the hand and body did on the 7th-day moves inward to reign over the desires of the heart and the thoughts of the mind. The day doesn't change. Thus, the external law, written on stone tablets for the physically circumcised nation of Israel, was a copy and type of the internal law written on tablets of flesh for the spiritually circumcised nation. The law and the prophets were not abolished (*v.* 17). What was abolished was the division of humanity made by hands (Eph 2:14-15).

At Sinai, the *Logos* as *Theos* (John 1:1-2) “married” [in that the *two* became *one*, and eventually one flesh] the natural nation of Israel. But Israel proved to be an adulterous wife, going after other gods, committing spiritual fornication with sticks and stones, the works of human hands. So Israel was divided: two nations came as daughters from one. Still, Israel [now Jerusalem and Samaria] played the whore with Egyptians, Assyrians, Chaldeans—with every foreign god with which these sisters came into contact. Thus, the Lord put both daughters away as a husband would an adulterous wife (Ezek chaps 16, 23). But before the Lord was free to marry another wife, either both daughters or the Husband had to die. One or the other. The *Logos* was not free to marry again until the marriage made at Sinai ended in death. So the *Logos* came as the man Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:14), a natural Israelite, thereby literally becoming one flesh with the nation He married at Sinai. And He died at Calvary, murdered by his adulterous wife. The marriage ended. He was free to marry another (Rom 7:1-4), and will marry again upon His return as Messiah.

Until the marriage of the Lamb, the Church is as Mary was to Joseph prior to the birth of Jesus; the Church is pregnant with the firstborn son of the last Adam. The Church is the last Eve, created when Jesus breathed on ten of His disciples and said,

Receive the Holy Spirit [Pneuma 'Agion] (John 20:22), and she will give birth prior to when she goes into labor with her firstborn son (Isa 66:7-8). Her hard labor pains [birth contractions] begin the seven endtime years of tribulation.

The firstborn son of the last Eve will, as the firstborn son of the first Eve did, kill his righteous brother, the one who keeps and lives by the commandments that have been written on both brothers' hearts and placed in both brothers' minds.

The Lord's Day will begin when the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ (Rev 11:15). It will begin when spiritual Babylon and its king cease to reign over the mental topography of human beings; it begins when Satan and his angels are cast from heaven (Rev 12:9-10); it begins when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28) in the manner foreshadowed on the day of Pentecost following Calvary. Yes, the empowerment of the disciples on that day of Pentecost is a copy and shadow of the Second Passover liberation of the Church from the law of sin and death (Rom 7:25) that presently dwells in the flesh of every disciple—**AND** of the baptism of the world in Spirit halfway through the seven endtime years. One visible shadow appearing three times (Acts 2, 10, 19) is cast by three realities: the first at the beginning of the seven endtime years [of spiritual Israel]; the second at the middle of these endtime years [of *the nations*]; the third after the thousand years when the great White Throne Judgment occurs [of the repentant resurrected dead that never previously had life in the heavenly realm].

As the greater Christian Church hasn't understood Grace, it hasn't understood when the Church began, and it hasn't understood when the Holy Spirit would empower human beings. It debated whether the Church succeeded circumcised Israel as the holy nation of God (Exod 19:5-6 & 1 Pet 2:9). It couldn't decide. —and the Church died when the *Logos* born as the man Jesus, the last Adam, died at Calvary and then presented to Himself the last Eve the evening [before sunset] that He ascended and was accepted by His Father and our Father, His God and our God (John 20:17).

When John Nelson Darby and his contemporaries adopted what they perceived to be *the literal, historical-grammatical method of Bible interpretation* little did they understand—although they should have—that meaning is always assigned by the reader [auditor] to linguistic *icons* or *signifiers*. No text can be understood in any other way. The icon *malix* is an example, a word to which mid 20th-Century residents of Oregon's central coast routinely assigned an object intended to conceal from school teachers and other civic officials the nature and source of the family's meat. If my neighbor's son or daughter told his or her teacher that my neighbor shot a *malix* last night, the teacher would not—unless privy to the code—realize that my neighbor had killed a deer. Likewise, if Darby, or Dwight L. Moody, Reuban Archer Torrey, James M. Gray, Cyrus I. Scofield, William J. Eerdman, A.C. Dixon, or Benny Hinn—if the entirety of the faculty of the Moody Bible Institute and the Dallas Theological Seminary have not heard the voice of Jesus (and we can know for certain that they have not by how and when they took or take the sacraments), none of them can assign the proper linguistic objects [meanings] to Scripture passages. No reaction of theirs against the established Church, no interpretation of Scripture, no explication of prophecy will be of Christ Jesus. All of their icon/object assignments will come from their fellowship with demons, for attempting to eat the body and drink the blood of the Lord on any night but that on

which He was betrayed (1 Cor 11:23-24) has the bread and wine being nothing but the fruit of the ground, the offering of Cain. Such attempts are provoking the Lord to jealousy (1 Cor 10:22); for disciples cannot eat the Passover of the Lord on the night that He was betrayed and still partake of the cup and table of demons (*vv.* 20-21) without provoking the Lord in the same way that natural Israel provoked *YHWH*, its *Elohim*, by worshiping the gods of Canaan. And to not eat the Passover on the night that He was betrayed leaves the disciple without a covering for sin (Matt 26:27-28).

The long and the short of the matter is that the movement of the Plymouth Brethren in the 1820s was a human reaction against the social and theological turmoil arising from the Industrial Revolution—*dispensationalism* isn't of God, never was, but will result in a great many disciples rebelling against God when the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:30). For antinomian *dispensationalism* will cause newly liberated disciples to spurn obedience to God when the disciple's only covering for his or her lawlessness will be obedience. These disciples, because they don't love the truth and haven't practiced walking uprightly before God, will attempt to enter God's rest on the following day, just as the nation that left Egypt attempted to enter God's rest (Ps 95:10-11) on the following day (Num 14:40-41). The natural nation could not, even though this nation acknowledged that it had sinned. The spiritual nation will not be able to enter God's rest because of its unbelief, made manifest by its lawlessness when it refuses to keep the Sabbath commandment, opting instead to observe the following day.

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The middle of the 2nd-Century CE was a difficult period for the Christian Church—as difficult a period as natural Israel had once Joshua and Caleb were no longer present; as difficult a period as Israel had once Solomon died. About 155 CE, Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, quarreled with Anicetus, the bishop of Rome, over when to celebrate the resurrection of Christ Jesus. Polycarp would not change the practice he had received from John, that of observing the 14th of the first month. Anicetus would not either take the sacraments on the 14th, the night that Jesus was betrayed, nor would he celebrate the resurrection on any day but Sunday. Anicetus had, by his actions, separated himself from the Body of Christ. Yet, it is to the practice and customs of Rome that modern Christianity looks to resolve theological questions. (It is unfortunate that Polycarp argued for the 14th on the basis of having received the tradition from John: the stronger argument would have been that Jesus is the Lamb of God, sacrificed on the 14th between evens, and that Passover points forward to the spiritual liberation of disciples from sin and death, a time when the lives of men will again be given as Israel's ransom [Isa 43:4] and a time for which the physical liberation from physical bondage was a copy and shadow [Isa 43:3 & Exod chap 12].)

Still in the 2nd-Century CE, Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, quarreled with Victor, then bishop of Rome, about whether to keep the 14th, or Sunday. By this time, neither the church at Ephesus, nor the church at Rome was wholly keeping the laws of God. Both had compromised with the truth. Neither well-heard the voice of Jesus.

Then in the 3rd-Century, a new method of assigning meaning to Scripture arose with Origen and other scholars in Alexandria, who produced an interpretative system based on allegory. This Egyptian school of thought embraced those elements of pagan Greek philosophy that Christianity hadn't already adopted. So the stage was set for the pagan

Emperor Constantine, at the Nicene Council (ca. 325 CE), to determine what was “sound doctrine” for the Church of God. In the pleasant summer breezes blowing ashore from the Black Sea, the Christian Church was officially taken captive by spiritual Babylon.

However, twelve centuries later, a remnant of the Christian Church left spiritual Babylon to rebuild the house of God in the Jerusalem above. This remnant started out of the gates of Babylon with Ulrich Zwingli and other Protestant Reformers, but this remnant, commissioned by the spiritual king of Persia under orders from God, wasn't seeking to reform the “old church” (i.e., the Roman Church). Rather, the remnant sought to return to the apostolic era and rebuild the Church from the Bible. Thus, Luther and Zwingli and Calvin were never of this Anabaptist remnant, which, when a remnant of this departing remnant returned to keeping the 7th-day Sabbath, those reformers finally crossed into the spiritual Land Beyond the River. Their long trek was across ideas, not the geography of the Ottoman Empire.

The Covenant Theology that developed from Calvin and others is as much the product of spiritual Babylon as was the Roman Church's trafficking in relics. In fact, all dogmas or doctrines that have disciples worshiping on the 8th-day are of Babylon, not of the Jerusalem above. And the Tree of Life doesn't grow on the plains of spiritual Chaldea.

As the order went out to rebuild the physical house of God in the Jerusalem below, thus beginning the seventy weeks prophecy, an order went out to rebuild the spiritual house of God in the Jerusalem above. The return of a circumcised remnant from Babylon to Judea is a copy and shadow of the Church's return to apostolic theology...if a disciple knows Jesus and hears His voice, the disciple will keep His commandments, and walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:3-6). If a disciple says that he or she knows Jesus, but will not keep His commandments and walk as Jesus walked [Jesus walked as a man of Judea], the disciple is a liar. This disciple can be sincere, can love a figment of his or her imagination, but the disciple neither knows Jesus nor hears His voice. And so it is with the super-apostles who teach *dispensationalism* to spiritual infants, too young to discern that the pap from which they nurse is not of Christ, but of the dragon.

Once the Church had been taken captive by spiritual Babylon, the pre-Millennial return of Christ Jesus was obscured by a sandstorm of allegories, with much of the dust produced by Augustine apologizing for Jesus not returning earlier. And the Roman Church, with a face-full of dirt, embarked on a theology of works unrelated to walking uprightly before God—

Legalism is only a dirty word to those who swallowed too much dust raised by the Roman Church dragging its heels across the Chaldean desert. Once a disciple leaves Babylon and returns to Judea, where he or she eats the body and blood of the paschal Lamb of God, the disciple clears nose and throat, cleanses him or herself of sin by drinking of the cup of the Lord, and strives to obey the laws of God that are inscribed on heart and mind. *Legalist* is the label antinomian teachers of spiritual Israel attaches to those disciples who have about them a different Spirit as Caleb had a different spirit, meaning that since the Church is of one spirit, those who are antinomians are not really of the Church, but of the Adversary...*many are called, but few are chosen* (Matt 22:14), for broad is the way to destruction and to *dispensationalism*, and narrow is the path of obedience to God.

Jesus will return quickly once the Lord's Day begins. That time is not far in the future, but it is not today or tomorrow. First, spiritual Israel must be [liberated from sin and death](#); the Son of Man must be revealed, meaning that the garment of Grace will be laid aside so that the Body of the Lord will be fully visible to man and angels. Then, the only covering for sin a disciple will have is his or her obedience—and the disciple who hasn't practiced walking uprightly before God will run shrieking back into *dispensationalism* as he or she rebels in the great falling away (2 Thess 2:3) when the lawless one is revealed.

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