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Commentary — From the Margins *God is One!*

And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, “Which commandment is the most important of all?” Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul [*psuche*— $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta\varsigma$] and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There are no other commandments greater than these.” (Mark 12:28–31)

The command to love God with heart, life, mind, and strength is part of *the Lord is one*: does a person not make him or herself “one” with that which he or she loves above all else? And if the person loves God above all else, including above life itself, then will this person not do what God commands, walking as God walks, imitating God in all the person does? So if Jesus is one with the Father (John 17:20–23), then disciples who will be one with Jesus will walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:3–6) and will imitate Paul as he imitates Jesus (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17) ... does anyone disagree with this? And if anyone does, what grounds supported by which Scriptures can the person cite? Surely no one believes that a person can live as someone from *the nations* [a Gentile] and still walk as Jesus walked.

Christians secretly chuckled when, following the 9/11 terrorist attack, Western news media discussed the tenet of Islamic belief that has a man receiving seventy celestial virgins when he enters heaven. How, Christians wondered, could anyone believe in such a nonsensical idea? Yet these same Christians have no doubts that they will be in heaven with God when they die. They claim to be one with Christ. And because of their faith, they sincerely believe that at death they will be with Christ, who has gone ahead of them to prepare a spot with the Father for them so that when He comes again, they will be with Him. But while here on earth, they do not walk as Jesus walked; they do not live as He lived; they do not even attempt to keep the commandments while claiming that they love God with their whole heart, life, mind and strength.

Somewhere within a disciple lays a disconnected circuit that interrupts logic when the disciple professes love for God while continuing to live as a Gentile. It is as if the offense of fleshly circumcision had not ended at Calvary. The disciple who lives as a Gentile voluntarily remains separated from Israel and the covenants of promise (Eph 2:12).

This disconnect is apparent in the question, where will Christ be when He comes again? Will He not be here on earth? When He comes again, where else can He be but here on earth? So if Christ has gone ahead to prepare a spot

[τόπον] for disciples so that they can be with Him when He returns to earth, then, first, no one goes to where He works preparing a spot until He returns. Second, if He goes to the Father to prepare this spot so that disciples can be with Him when He returns, where will this spot be when He returns, in heaven or here on earth?

Since Christ will be here on earth when He returns, then will not those who await His return also be here on earth while they wait? Will they wait in heaven so that when He returns He can take disciples to Himself where He is here on earth? This would mean dragging disciples out of heaven and back to this earth. Jesus said,

Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house [οικία] are many rooms [μοναὶ]. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place [τόπον] for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I'm going. (John 14:1–4)

And what sort of “rooms” [*monay*—μοναὶ] are these? Are they apartments? Is the Father's house like a “house” here on earth? Do these *rooms* have to be built onto the Father's house as was done when a Hebrew son married and brought his wife home to life with his parents?

If God is one—and He is—then there is, in Jesus' words, a critical concept concealed by translation into English and by 21st-Century Western cultures, but this concept is disclosed in *Believe in God; believe also in me*. Jesus equates believing in God with believing in Him. He makes believing in one the equal to believing in the other: “one” is the “other.” Not by any trick of magic, but by Jesus not being ashamed to make Himself equal to God (John 5:18; Phil 2:6), “one” and the “other” become the same.

How is it possible that *one* and the *other* are the same, for this seems as illogical as seventy celestial virgins awaiting a suicide bomber?

The house of God is one house, not many houses. And in the Father's house dwells the Father, as well as Christ Jesus, who has gone ahead of disciples to prepare many *monay*, or *mones*, which would be better translated as “legal stays” of death sentences, or as contractual adoption papers, but because a “house” [οικία] has “rooms” in our psyches not stays of execution, “rooms” is how that passage reads when translated into English.

But within “rooms” being assigned as the best English linguistic icon to represent the object the translating team thought Jesus meant when John records, μοναὶ, is the entirety of a physically circumcised Israelite dwelling in a house in Egypt or in a tent in the wilderness forming the lively representation of a born-of-spirit son of God dwelling in a “tent” of flesh: the Father and the Son dwell in a house or tabernacle that is analogous to the tent in which either a physically or a spiritually circumcised Israelite dwelt or dwells.

The profound implications of the preceding sentence is that the house in which the Father and the Son dwell is in heaven and is composed of “spirit,” an overworked linguistic icon. The timber and stones, daub and wattle, brick and mortar, lath and plaster—the substance of every type of home construction in this world is of the same elemental elements as are used to produce the air-breathing

occupant of the house. But a brick is not a person even if both are composed of the same atoms. An animal skin tent is not a person even if the tanned hides from which the tent is sewn once covered breathing creatures that shared breath like that which humankind has.

In the case of a physically circumcised Israelite in a house in Egypt, the human person differed greatly in taxonomical complexity from the house in which this person dwelt. Further, physical circumcision separated the Israelite from other human beings both outwardly and inwardly (by the thoughts that caused the person to identify with being of Israel). Although both the Israelite and his house were composed of the same atoms, arranged differently, the arrangement produced a hierarchal order that began with stones or mud, extended upward to trees, then farther upward to the beasts, then to natural Egyptians, and finally to circumcised Hebrews.

While debate will exist over whether a circumcised Hebrew was higher than an uncircumcised Egyptian, look what happened when the death angel passed over all the land: firstborns not covered by the blood of a paschal lamb were slain. Trees and stones do not have firstborns. No timber was destroyed; no stones were cleaved in-two. So a clear separation existed between the elements from which houses were constructed and the same rearranged elements from which living creatures [*nephesh*] were constructed, with a second division or separation occurring between circumcised and uncircumcised human beings.

The second separation between living creatures not circumcised and living creatures that were circumcised made no distinction between man and beast: all firstborns not covered by the blood of a paschal lamb perished, so the death angel made an equal separation between the Egyptian and his livestock and the Israelite and his livestock as existed between stones and living creatures.

The above can slip by too quickly: circumcision represented “life” with uncircumcision representing death, or the non-living. Although Pharaoh as the earthly representative of the prince of this world held power over Israel, Pharaoh’s power was like that of death holding power over a living person. If the Israelite feared death, the Israelite feared Pharaoh. So the slaughter of firstborns was Israel’s ransom (Isa 43:3) from Pharaoh; for the death of these firstborns of Egypt “satisfied” *Death*, in that they sated *Death’s* appetite, with *Death* now being the fourth horseman of the Apocalypse.

Changing referents for a word is called equivocation, something at which Greeks excelled and Romans hated. The Apostle Paul uses equivocation throughout his writings, and the Apostle Paul wrote that the visible things of this world reveal the invisible things of God, even His attributes—and the visible things of this world reveal a difference between a man and his or her house even though both are composed of the same atoms. The visible things of this world also reveal a mostly concealed difference between a circumcised Israelite and every male of “the nations” [Gentiles], a difference made by acts of the hands of other Israelites, a difference that should have caused the man to walk uprightly before God rather than bent and twisted by sin and the superstitions of this world.

Moving upward from two-dimensional shadow to a son of God dwelling in a tent of flesh, the new creature born of spirit is no longer in the same unfurled

dimensions as is the tent of flesh: the new creature is not composed of atoms as is the tent of flesh. Rather the new creature is like thought itself ... Native American artists conveyed “sight” [observation] as little arrows that caused animals to duck away. At a time of heightened awareness because of the danger involved, I “felt” (as if a hand were laid on my shoulders) eyes watching me, eyes that I couldn’t easily locate, but eyes that prevented me from continuing until I located and killed the observer. So “thought” that is transmitted through observation is detectable under certain conditions and in certain situations by human beings, but is regularly detected by prey animals. As far as can be determined, this “thought” does not exist as the movement of atoms, but as some form of an energy transmission. Unfortunately, today this is the domain of parapsychology, a mostly discredited field of study.

Being born of spirit has, as its literal referent, birth by the spirit of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], a non-physical birth that cannot come from the first Adam or from the elements of this world. Paul wrote,

When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Rom 6:20–23 emphasis added)

If a son of disobedience (Eph 2:2–3), consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32), thus placed under the dominion of sin—if this son of disobedience brings forth the wages of sin (i.e., death) until set free from sin to become servants of God, receiving as the wages of this servant’s service to God eternal life in Christ Jesus—then from whom and from where did the son of disobedience receive eternal life prior to receiving it in Christ Jesus as the gift of God?

The first Adam was told that because he ate forbidden fruit, “By the sweat of your face / you shall eat bread, / till you return to the ground, / for out of it you were taken; / for you are dust, / and to dust you shall return” (Gen 3:19). Dust does not have an immortal soul or any immortal quality about it in a world that is passing away (1 John 2:17). And Adam was driven from the garden before he could eat of the Tree of Life (Gen 3:22–24); so Adam was dust, which is what Solomon wrote about man:

I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are beasts. For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath [*ruwach*], and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. All go to the same place. All are dust, and to dust all return. Who knows whether the spirit [*ruwach*] of man goes upward and the spirit [*ruwach*] of the beast goes down into the earth? So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him? (Eccl 3:18–22)

The dishonesty of the translation is evident: it would never do to have Solomon say that beasts and man have the same “spirit,” for then it would be obvious that since they have the same breath or spirit their fates would be the same. Either both would go to heaven or neither would go. And Paul says that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable” (1 Cor 15:50) so it would be that neither went.

Humankind is composed of the elements of this earth, thus sharing the fate of other air-breathing creatures which is death of a sort that has the body returning to the dust of the ground—and God tests men and women to see if this is what they believe about themselves. Pharaohs will not become stars in the cosmos. The dead will not become shades in a kingdom of the underworld, such as Odysseus visited. There is neither extreme cold nor heat in the realm of the dead. There is only unconsciousness, for the dead know nothing (Eccl 9:5).

There was nothing about the first Adam that was immortal, so he had nothing he could impart to his descendants that was immortal. Yes, there was a non-physical aspect of him that might have been felt by a gazelle, a non-physical aspect like that which King Nebuchadnezzar had about him that was taken from the king when he was given the “nature” of an ox for seven years (Dan chap 4). But this non-physical aspect is possessed by both men and beasts: it is their “natures” that will be changed (Isa 11:6–9) when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28) when the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ (Rev 11:15; Dan 7:9–14). And these natures separate cats from dogs and man from God so that man is not one with God when humanly born.

Being born of spirit is not a renewal or regeneration of an immortal soul received from a man having his way with a woman, for the concept of immortality implies having everlasting life which, within the framework of Christendom, only comes as the gift of the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is only by dwelling in the house of the Father that a person puts on immortality—and dwelling in this house with the Father requires a stay [*monay*] or canceling of the record of debt that stands against us with its legal demands (Col 2:14).

Every person is under sentence of death because of dwelling in the house of the first Adam, a house consigned to disobedience when Adam was driven from the garden of God ... this use of “house” to refer to a genus and species is unusual, but used by Paul:

For we know that if the tent [*house of the tabernacle*—οικία τοῦ σκηνῶν], which is our earthly home, is destroyed, we have a building of God [οικοδομηὴν ἐκ θεοῦ], a house [οικίαν] not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that *we would be further clothed*, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is

God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee¹. (2 Cor 5:1–5 emphasis added)

The *tent* of flesh in which each disciple dwells is analogous to the adobe house in Egypt in which a physically circumcised Israelite dwelt, or analogous to the fabric or animal skin tent in which a physically circumcised Israelite dwelt in the wilderness. Each person's fleshly body is, now, a "house of the tabernacle" of the first Adam. After being born of spirit, a disciple's fleshly body is a house in the tabernacle of God, with this earthly house, buried in baptism, forming the lively representation of the "rooms" or stays of execution which Jesus went to prepare in the heavenly building of God.

In the many *μοναὶ* [*monay*] in the Father's house are baptized disciples: Paul said that disciples are the temple of God, the tabernacle of God, with each person now being a *house of the temple*, making the temple not a collection of fleshly tents but a building that incorporates every "new nature" or "new self" that has been born of spirit as a room or apartment in a spiritual skyscraper that is the Father's house. This is a "hive" or "colony" concept, with the hive or colony being identified by the umbrella icon /*God*/.

The Father's house or outward body (analogous to a disciple's fleshly body) is God; thus, the Father is *God* for He is the Most High. The Son is also *God*, for He dwells in the house of Father at His right hand. And here is where Evangelical Christendom has problems with Paul's argument: if the disciple is born of spirit, receiving life from the Father through the earnest of His Breath, then the disciple is a son of God, having been adopted by the Father through the Father drawing this person from the world. And if a son, then the disciple dwells in the house of God as a son whereas angels are servants, ministering spirits, and are not sons. For an angel to say, "I will make myself like the Most High" (Isa 14:14), the angel commits blasphemy. But when a son declares himself a son, especially after the Father has declared the disciple a son, no blasphemy is committed, for a son is truly a son. And since this son will dwell in the house of the Father, with the house [*οικία*] identified by the umbrella icon /*God*/, then the disciple, being *one* with the Father and with the Son (John 17:20–23), is "one" through dwelling in the same *house* as the Father and the Son dwell.

God is one, but in this house [*οικία*] dwell both the Father and the Son, making the linguistic icon /*one*/ a description of the house, not of the Father who can be likened, although at a higher taxonomical level, to the new creature, new nature that dwells within the disciple's tent of flesh in this world. God is not a family though that analogy has some merit, but the analogy also has the fatal flaw of feuding cousins occurring within a family's framework ... if God is not one, God is divided and will fail (Matt 12:25); so God can only be one, but He cannot be one in the common sense of the word describing a solitary entity, with this entity

¹ Or, "God, the one having given to us the earnest of the spirit [*πνεύματος*]" — the earnest of the spirit is given as earnest money is given to secure a contract. It is not the full amount of moneys, but it is real money. So God has given disciples life through receiving a figurative puff of His divine Breath [*πνεῦμα θεού*], thereby disclosing that His Breath or His Spirit is not a personage to be fully received at once but an activating force that is dispersed as moneys are paid out to fulfill a contract.

restricted to being the Father, who was not known to Israel or to any human being prior to Jesus revealing Him to the first disciples.

Christology, primarily concerned with the nature of Christ, also addresses how the Father and Son relate to each other. But the Bible has been a sealed text with neither natural Israel nor lawless disciples able to understand its metaphorical language; thus, early Church fathers continued natural Israel's idolatrous worship of monotheism, even to advancing an unexplainable triune deity of three entities of one substance being one God. But Trinitarians strived with their feuding cousins that insisted God was one, Jehovah; that the man Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary; and that scriptures supporting Jesus being the creator of all that is are corrupted by scribal errors. Hence, the basis for inter-Christendom warring emerged and is now as alive as it was when Vandals banished Trinitarians from North Africa, converting Catholic fellowships to Arian worship, revealing to conqueror and conquered that Christian teaching about a human being having an immortal soul that, for the Catholic, immediately went to be with God at death wasn't truly believed. Most Trinitarians loved life more than they wanted to be with God. It was better to be a living Arian than a dead Trinitarian, and this will again be the case as, in the Tribulation, Arian Christendom will once more forcibly convert Trinitarians, this time with food rather than with swords ... maybe 1500 years of civilization has produced some good even without Christendom gaining spiritual understanding.

The concept of the Father and the Son dwelling in the house [οικία] of the Father, with this house being God, is almost too simple for disciples to comprehend its significance: one God, one house, not many houses; one house forming one city, New Jerusalem, the city adorned as a bride (Rev 21:2). The Father dwells in His house with His firstborn Son, the first of many brothers, all sons of the Father, all dwelling in the Father's house, all one with the Father and with Christ Jesus, all covered by the roof of the building identified as God, all forming New Jerusalem.

In his vision, John the Revelator says, "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them'" (Rev 21:3) Note: the remainder of the sentence, *as their God* does not appear in the Greek. What appears is:

Ἴδοὺ (*Behold*) ἡ (*the*) σκηνὴ (*tabernacle*) τοῦ θεοῦ (*of God*) μετὰ (*with*) τῶν ἀνθρώπων (*men*), καὶ (*and*) σκηνώσει (*he will tabernacle*) μετ' (*with*) αὐτῶν (*them*), καὶ (*and*) αὐτοὶ (*they*) λαοὶ (*people*) αὐτοῦ (*his*) ἔσονται (*will be*), καὶ (*and*) αὐτὸς (*he himself*) ὁ θεὸς μετ' (*God with them*) αὐτῶν ἔσται (*will be*).

The tabernacle or house of God will be with men, and he will "tabernacle" [used as a verb] with men, and they will be his people, and he himself will be God with them — he will be *Immanuel* (Isa 7:14).

But what are the ramifications of, *he himself will be God with them*? If *he himself* will be God with them, then they will all be God.

Yet God is one! This cannot be said too many times. And for a human being to cross dimensions and enter into heaven as part of the harvest of firstfruits, the person must be born of spirit as a son of God, initially domiciled in a tent of flesh,

but further clothed in or by the Father's house when glorified as if the Father's house were a garment like Christ's righteousness. And unless a person is born of spirit as a son of God, the person cannot understand the things of God, cannot entertain the thought of God being the Father's house that is to him as a disciple's fleshly body is to the disciple. But this is what has been revealed.

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