

Commentary — From the Margins *Linguistic Determinatives*

1.

The question of why someone would write that Judaism, ancient and modern, was dull of hearing and had their eyes closed when the oracles of God had been entrusted to them fosters an additional question: did ancient scribes and priests actually record and repeat the words of Moses, or did they make changes to Moses that amounts to adding words or subtracting words—and if additions or subtractions were made, were these additions or subtracts of consequence?

In high school, I wrote a little: I actually remember nothing of what I wrote but my youngest sister Marie has said that she remembers the stories and that she liked them. Regardless, I know that when I began to write nearly fulltime in December 1979 while aboard a small boat tied to the old Sub Dock at Dutch Harbor, not knowing how to type and with a dictionary on my left knee because I really couldn't spell (the fruit of an audio form of dyslexia), I used too many determining expressions when writing dialogue in my immature effort to reduce ambiguity as to who was speaking to whom. Simply put, I used too many *he said*, *she said* rather than letting the dialogue stand by itself, trusting the reader to assign speech to the speaker ... in English, if I want you to answer me, I only have to say or write, "Send me an answer."

The *you* as in "You send me an answer" is implied in English, but not in German, in which the person being commanded needed to be referenced. ... In English, the *you* is understood but not vocalized and hence not transcribed. And the same applies when writing dialogue in which the essence of what is said is inscribed, not how a person actually speaks, with the transcription of actual speech as in Andy Warhol's 1968 book, *a, A Novel*, disclosing that *real speech* is nearly unintelligible when transcribed as it is uttered.

Intuitively, a writer wants understood, the reason for writing. And while ambiguity is a novelist's friend, permitting the reader [auditor] to take ownership of the text through resolving ambiguities left by the novelist and thus *writing* an unwritten portion of the text, ambiguity is no friend of historians ... ambiguity in Holy Writ will have the Believer resolving the ambiguity and thereby taking ownership of Holy Writ for the Believer will have mentally produced a hypertext that links two or more texts or bridges a hole in the text or repairs bumps in what should be a smooth narrative. However, for an unBeliever an ambiguity in Scripture reinforces the person's unbelief, thereby pushing the unBeliever farther away from God and creating self-stratification in a *Believer's profile* akin to an archeological dig's soil profile.

Every person alive today is either under judgment or establishing the basis for the person's judgment that will come after the Thousand Years. The Christian

who has Scripture and who claims to understand the mysteries of God is without excuse for his or her wrongdoing [i.e., transgression of the commandments]; whereas the unBeliever who does by nature those things that the Law requires—having love for God and for neighbor and brother—will be justified by the manifested love of the person according to the gospel that Paul declared (Rom 2:9–16). So salvation doesn't come to any person through how much he or knows, or through what name the person uses for God, or through whether the person is or isn't a *Christian* today. Salvation comes by whether the person truly has manifested love for neighbor and brother; for evil exists in their present world, with *evil* at its core being nothing more than unbelief, not believing God regardless of whether the person has Scripture or doesn't have Scripture for the things of this world, those things that can be seen with eyes and touched with fingers, reveal the invisible things of God, even His power and nature. Hence, the person who will be saved must overcome unbelief even when the person is mired in doubts and perceived scriptural contradictions.

The writer who wants understood will add to his or her text determining phrases such as,

I will tell of the decree:

YHWH said to me, “You are my Son;
today I have begotten you” (Ps 2:7)

with <YHWH said to me> forming a determinative phrase consisting of the never-pronounced Tetragrammaton and with the remainder of the phrase existing to reduce ambiguity. The psalmist's use of the determinative phrase would be struck out in modern English poetry:

I will tell you the decree—

You are my Son

today I have begotten you.

The decree, *You are my son / today I have begotten you*, will stand alone with the phrase <*the decree*> working against the concept of being humanly *begotten* and suggesting something akin to legal *adoption*, with the context of the Psalm linking *the decree* to the narrator who stands above *the nations* that *rage* and *the people* who *plot in vain*, thereby making the narrator a deity. The entirety of the determinative phrase <YHWH said to me> is not needed except to eliminate ambiguity—and this determinative phrase pushes the auditor away from the psalmist's lines, thus creating distance between man and God.

If it were the psalmist's intention to elevate God and reinforce the existence of the gulf between heaven and earth, then the use of determinative phrases and clauses would accomplish this purpose—

In the Old Testament, the standard introduction of a word from God was, *Thus says YHWH*, with this determinative phrase being a carryover from earlier language inscription ... as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, Moses would have learned to read and write hieroglyphic inscription as a youth, with hieroglyphic inscription consisting of one or more glyphs that were pronounced phonetically followed by one, two, or three glyphs that were determinative glyphs that were never pronounced but were used to eliminate ambiguity [for

disambiguation]. And because these determinative glyphs were not pronounced, when hieroglyphs were transcribed in phonetic morphemes, these determinative glyphs were not transcribed. In essence, part of the Egyptian text was omitted from the transcribed, the unpronounced part.

Again, for pedagogical reasons: in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, the inscribed language Moses would have learned when a youth in Pharaoh's household, words were composed of signs of two types, *phonetic signs* that correspond to letters, and *determinatives* that were inscribed but generally not transcribed when glyphs are transliterated into phonetic languages. Most Egyptian words were constructed of one or more phonetic signs followed by a determinative sign. Some words had two or three determinative signs following the phonetic signs whereas very common words had no determinative and the most common words were written as just a determinative with no phonetic signs; plus there were abbreviations for common phrases that consisted of one or two determinative signs, ideograms marking semantic categories in logographic inscription, with determinatives also being common to Sumerian, Akkadian [a Semitic language as Hebrew is] and Hittite [an Indo-European language]. Determinatives were not pronounced and as such were not generally transcribed when logographic inscription was transliterated into phonetic inscription; yet determinative glyphs carried meaning and were used by Egyptians for more than simple word dividers as they have been treated for a century. These determinative glyphs apparently derived from glyphs for real words as modern computer analysis of Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription reveals. Therefore, when these determinatives are not transcribed because they were not pronounced, the original text shrinks in content and value—a portion of the text has been ignorantly but intentionally omitted in a manner akin to early and mid 20th-Century linguists ignoring the *clicks* made by Native American storytellers when transcribing Native oral narratives (the *clicks* have meaning).

Cuneiform tablets from others peoples in the Levant before, during, and after Moses wrote used determinatives to identify speakers and the languages in which they spoke as well as for disambiguation. It would be unreasonable to suppose that Moses having been trained to read and write with determinative glyphs and going into a region in which determinative signs were used in the Semitic languages written there would not also have used determinative signs/glyphs in his inscription of the words of God. And it would be equally reasonable to assume that a determinative glyph that Moses used would not be pronounced. Therefore I will here assert that the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* is a determinative glyph that appears in inscription as a carryover from when Moses wrote and is not a personal name or a noun that should ever be pronounced.

The Christian who attempts to pronounce the Tetragrammaton is illiterate, perhaps the kindest thing that can be said for this presumptive Christian.

2.

Job was unable to grasp the distance between himself and the Lord; thus, the Lord demanded that Job stand on his feet as a man and answer basic questions

that an educated person today can pretty well answer, thus permitting God to ask of this educated person even more difficult questions. And if Job, a man perfect in all of his ways, could not comprehend the distance between heaven and earth, and if educated men and women today believe that God sprung from the foreheads of men as Athena sprang from the forehead of Zeus, then the distance between man and God shrinks into the imagination and there was good reason for Classical Hebrew inscription to retain the use of determinatives to reinforce the separation that exists between man and God; i.e., between the non-physical inner self that is of the supra-dimensional heavenly realm and the physical outer self that is of the creation.

But with the coming of Christ Jesus and with the giving of the spirit (i.e., the breath of God [πνεῦμα Θεοῦ] in the breath of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ]), the separation between man and God really did shrink until it was less than handshake distance.

Whereas the prophets of old used the determinative phrase, *Thus says* YHWH, in introducing the words of the Lord that were to be delivered to Israel—these prophets having received the words of the Lord via visions—once the spirit was given, disciples of Christ Jesus almost exclusively received words from the Father via the *parakletos*, the spirit of truth, a holy spirit sent from the Father whose sons disciples were/are. This means that rather than receiving revelation via a vision, disciples receiving knowledge from the Father receive this information through *coming to know a matter* (e.g., John 6:69), or revelation via realization.

Yes, the Lord still employed visions in bestowing knowledge to disciples of Christ Jesus, but if a careful reading of Holy Writ is undertaken, the disciple will find that visions come from the glorified Christ Jesus as the visions given to the prophet of old came from *YAH*, who entered His creation as His only Son, the man Jesus the Nazarene. Hence, visions are of Jesus whereas revelation via realization comes from the Father through the *parakletos*.

Can a disciple get a matter wrong when revelation comes via realization from the *parakletos*? Certainly. But not really wrong.

There have been times when I have not fully understood a matter and have placed in print my partial understanding that opened the door to a better understanding that really could only have come through writing that was in reality *practice writing* or pre-writing. I have left these pieces on-line for one important reason (I have nothing to hide); for in my spiritual maturation will be seen the pattern for other disciples' spiritual maturation. What is seen in the gospel of Mark in particular is revelation via realization set into a shared text for a generation that did not personally know Christ Jesus but had only heard of Him through stories, some factual, some a little less than factual, and some far from factual. Matthew had been one of Jesus' disciples, but most likely Matthew did not personally witness Jesus' baptism. The same for Luke. And John Mark would have been too young to have remembered Jesus' baptism even if he had witnessed it. Thus, the gospels of these three agree as to what John the Baptist heard when Jesus emerged from the water and the breath of the Father [πνεῦμα

Θεοῦ] descended upon Him in the visible form of a dove, but they don't actually agree:

And when Jesus was baptized, immediately He went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." (Matt 3:16–17)

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And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Mark 1:11)

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Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on Him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Luke 3:21–22)

In Matthew's account, the Father spoke to John; whereas in Mark's and Luke's account, the Father spoke to Jesus ... remember, none of these three men were an eye witness to what transpired, with only Matthew even being a possible witness. All three were relying upon either Jesus telling that had happened—not a likely possibility—or on John telling them what had happened, or upon the *parakletos* to tell them what had happened, with the *parakletos* working in the disciple's subconscious mind, not conscious mind.

When the prophet Daniel received his long vision in the third year of Cyrus, the men who were with Daniel did not see the vision but "a trembling fell upon them and they fled to hide themselves" (Dan 10:7). When the Father spoke to Jesus on the 10th day of *Aviv* in the year when Jesus would be crucified, "Then a voice came from heaven: 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.' The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to him'" (John 12:28–29). None of the crowd really heard the words of the Father so even though they were witnesses to the words spoken, they could not have given reliable testimony as to what was actually said.

Jesus told the crowd, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine" (John 12:30); so if the Father spoke to Jesus when He was baptized, no one would know what was said. If the Father had spoken to John as Matthew's account suggests, then John would have heard but no one else.

One of the things that becomes apparent when Holy Writ is closely read is that the shadow and type of an event is physically seen; thus, the type and copy of the giving of the spirit to Jesus' disciples will be seen [was seen] in Jesus visibly receiving the breath of the Father in the form of a dove. The type and copy of the world being baptized in the breath of Christ (Joel 2:28) was seen/heard on that day of Pentecost following Calvary: "And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2). The type and copy of the world being baptized in fire (see Matt 3:11; Rev 21:1) was seen when, "And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them

and rested on each one of them” (Acts 2:3). And the restoration of hard links between linguistic signifiers and signifieds as prophesied by Zephaniah (“For at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech, that all of them may call upon the name of the LORD and serve him with one accord” — 3:9) is seen in type and copy when the disciples on this day of Pentecost “were all filled with holy spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:4).

So other than through John the Baptist telling his disciples what he heard—and he might well have heard nothing but a thunder clap—when Jesus emerged from the water, or through the *parakletos* revealing to Jesus’ disciples knowledge that could not otherwise be known, none of Jesus’ disciples while He lived or after His death and resurrection could have known what the actual words spoken by the Father were ... are the actual words important? No, they are not. What if early manuscripts that have Luke saying that the Father quoting the words of Psalms 2:7 are really what was said? These words would certainly be appropriate; for when the divine breath of the Father descended upon the man Jesus the Nazarene, the only Son of the Logos/*YAH*, the man Jesus became the First of the firstborn sons of the Father. He was not, before receiving the breath of the Father, a second breath of life, the Son of the Father, but rather, He was the Son of *YAH*, with the Father being the God of the dead whereas *YAH*, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was the God of the living.

There is only one problem with Jesus’ disciples coming to know a matter through the groaning of the *parakletos*, the spirit of truth (the breath of God that reveals what has previously been concealed), and this problem is in trying to get knowledge through what the disciple already thinks he or she knows about a matter—trying to get revelation through the person’s biases and prejudices, superstitions and self-deceptions, all of which will smother, distort, and pervert what it is that the *parakletos* discloses to the disciple. Hence, John Mark, a young man even when he writes his gospel, both lacks some of the cultural biases that effect James and those disciples who are converts from the sect of the Pharisees as well as lacks wisdom that comes with age: Mark writes as a wild-eyed youth smitten by the miracles Jesus worked ... as any further scholar will find who bothers to read what I have written, I don’t spend much time in Mark, not because his gospel isn’t genuine but because I have experienced miracles and I am neither surprised nor overly awestruck when miracles happen—they happen because Jesus is our elder brother and friend. Why should we be surprised when a miracle occurs? We should be pleased. And Mark hadn’t quite reached this state when he wrote his gospel, or so it seems (he can tell me if I misread him when the time comes).

Remember, textual infallibility is not a condition of production but a state of receipt—and because human beings must assign linguistic signifieds to the signifiers of Holy Writ, infallibility can only occur when we as auditors fully hear the voice of Jesus and assign His meanings that have come to us through the *parakletos* to His words.

3.

Israel became dull of hearing and mostly blind when scribes and priests took the words of Moses written in a Semitic script [proto-Hebrew] and with unpronounced determinatives as was the practice of the region and the area, and transcribed Moses' words into Classical Old Hebrew, without understanding what the determinatives that, again, they had never heard pronounced meant; thus they inadvertently subtracted meaning from the words of Moses and shortened the distance between heaven and earth, thereby transforming the Lord into a deity like the household gods of Canaan, a deity for whom the queen of heaven was His consort as archeology reveals. A convoluted sentence? My sentences are generally nineteen words long with a word length of five letters. A person can identify a piece that I have written by my sentence length and structure, convoluted and circular. But this is not how all articles and essays I have written are structured. Once in a while I will actually write something that can be understood by readers ... why don't I write that way all the time? Because I write in a self-aware mood, and a simple, easily understood piece breaks the pattern I long ago unconsciously established for my writing. So a piece that can be understood exists to confuse authorial-ship, to introduce future questions about whether I really wrote the piece even though I have and will assert that I have.

Why am I bringing any of this up? Because critics doubt whether Paul wrote certain epistles that have been traditionally credited to him based on syntax and structural analysis ... if a scribe were to write a piece I dictated to the scribe, the scribe wouldn't necessarily write in sentences nineteen words long, nor write in the difficult sentence structures I employ. The scribe would think that I want to be understood and would strive to keep things simple and easily understood. And even though the article would be my words, the article would be rejected by critics as being mine due to the different style.

I mentioned Andy Warhol's book, *a, A Novel*, which is a response to James Joyce's *Ulysses* that was allegedly written in so-called stream-of-consciousness style ... true stream of consciousness writing is unintelligible, the point Warhol made. So one of the things that emerged from the 1960s was the commonality of self-aware texts that commented about themselves and criticized themselves as they were being constructed. If I know that linguists will look at my word usage and use some structuralism criteria to determine whether a text is of me or not, then should I not mess with their heads by producing texts that don't fit into a structuralism pattern? Sure I should. And this will now require that critics look harder at what has been said rather than at how whatever is said has been presented to the reader.

For example, the essence of my theological explication is the movement from hand to heart, from the outer self to the inner self, with the first Adam pertaining to the outer self and the second Adam to the inner self—with the woman pertaining to the outer self and the man pertaining to the inner self. If someone claimed to have a piece written by me that places importance on the flesh, the piece isn't of me or from me. The piece can be rejected out of hand. And the same pertains to any piece that has the souls of men frying in hell, writhing in pain but

not being quickly turned into ashes: the piece is a lie regardless of what its structure is. So while my structure could be mimicked, the content is really what matters.

If the central question of biblical criticism is whether Moses wrote the Torah—it isn't—and if the Book of Genesis doesn't fit the pattern of Moses' writings, which it doesn't, then should Moses be rejected as its author? The House of Judah and the temple in Jerusalem lost the Book of the Covenant for some extended period, but did the House of Israel and the priests of Jeroboam also lose the Book of the Covenant, notably the outer portion of the scroll that would have contained the Book of Genesis? Apparently not, for the Book of Genesis seems to be written in the style of Hebrew common to Samaria in the 9th-Century BCE; whereas the remainder of the Torah comes from the southern kingdom of Judah. But, a hypothetical, if the Book of the Covenant that was found in the days of King Josiah—

In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam, the secretary, to the house of the LORD, saying, "Go up to Hilkiyah the high priest, that he may count the money that has been brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the threshold have collected from the people. And let it be given into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the LORD, and *let them give it to the workmen who are at the house of the LORD, repairing the house (that is, to the carpenters, and to the builders, and to the masons), and let them use it for buying timber and quarried stone to repair the house.* But no accounting shall be asked from them for the money that is delivered into their hand, for they deal honestly." And Hilkiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiyah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. And Shaphan the secretary came to the king, and reported to the king, "Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of the LORD." Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, "Hilkiyah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king. When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiyah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the secretary, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying, "Go, inquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found. For great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us." So Hilkiyah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe

(now she lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter), and they talked with her. And she said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: 'Tell the man who sent you to me, Thus says the LORD, Behold, I will bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read. Because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath will be kindled against this place, and it will not be quenched. But to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Regarding the words that you have heard, because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the LORD, when you heard how I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, declares the LORD. Therefore, behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring upon this place.'" And they brought back word to the king. (2 Kings 22:3–20)

—was in the same condition as the temple of God, would it not be likely that the outer layers of the scroll would be damaged in the same way as the temple was damaged? And if this were the case (there is no evidence to suggest that it either is or isn't the case), then would not King Josiah have to send to wherever the House of Israel dwelt in captivity priests to attempt to recover whatever portion of the Book of the Covenant that was damaged, with the outer roles of the scroll being most likely damaged ... we see an example of this in the recovery of seven plays of the 5th-Century BCE Greek playwright Aeschylus.

Does reconciling the writing style of Genesis with the style of Exodus require some fancy dance steps? Yes it does, but is it essential that Moses be the author of Genesis? No it isn't. Is it essential that the Temptation Account in the Garden of Eden be factually true? No it isn't although it is most likely true; for the Temptation Account can well function as the Lazarus/Dives parable that is a Stoic after-death-fortune-reversal story that a Greek schoolmaster would have told to Greek students ... Jesus told mocking Pharisees a fictional story that placed them in the position of being Gentile children and He being their master and teacher, thereby turning their mocking back on them without less-educated Hebrews understanding what He did. Hence, only Luke records the parable (Luke 16:19–31).

The Temptation Account is *true enough* to serve as the true shadow and copy of the history of the Christian Church, the last Eve. Therefore, the account is *true*.

The difference in writing style between Genesis and Exodus could easily have its roots in the House of Judah losing the Book of the Covenant for long enough that no Passover observance of the sort Moses commanded had occurred since

the days of the Judges (2 King 23:21–23) ... if the oracles of God were entrusted to the Jews, rabbinical Judaism has much for which it will be held in account.

Over the next few weeks, I will address the dark wilderness of unbelief that has ensnared so many, even my own daughters. Although addressing apparent discrepancies in Holy Writ will not help those who are already lost, perhaps some few will stop, stand still, and wait for the light that is certain to come—and once in a while, I'll change styles and write something easy to read ... nah, the principles of God are so simple that the presentation of these principles need not also be simple.

And if you don't know what the rebus principle is, look it up; for the determinative Tetragrammaton *YHWH* is constructed on the rebus principle.

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