

Commentary — From the Margins *When the World Stands Still*

And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel while the people of Israel were going out defiantly. ... When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel ... said to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? ***What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt?*** Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The LORD will fight for you, and ***you have only to be silent.***" The LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground." (Ex 14:7, 9–16 double emphasis added)

1.

What have you, Christ Jesus, done to us in bringing us out from Sin? That is what taking the Passover represents: Christ Jesus bringing a second nation of Israel—a people circumcised of heart—out from sin through covering this people with the garment of His righteousness until the Second Passover liberation of this second “Israel,” the great nation the Lord told Moses that He would build from Moses, Moses’ objections notwithstanding. For with the Second Passover liberation of a second nation of Israel, the people [greater Christendom] will cry out to Christ Jesus, *What have you done to us, taking us out of the spiritual kingdom of Babylon*, the single mind set by which the world is presently ruled through the appetites of the belly and loins, albeit in social movement towards a “living wage” or towards equal rights for all peoples, especially those traditionally discriminated against by Moses: transgender individuals.

Just ask anyone working at a job paying only a state or the Federal minimum wage if the person is making a “living wage”? The questioner will be told, *No! No way!* Of course, if the person answers the questioner the person is alive and living, even if not prospering. So in every case, the person who is able to answer receives a *living wage*, even if the person is under-compensated for the work the person does.

The issue of transgender sexual identity is more of a problem ...

If a person has the ability to quit a minimum wage job and seek other employment, the person is not a slave: the slave truly cannot quit a job—

In many if not all cases of transgender sexual identity, the person cannot mentally return to the sexual identity of the person's birth certificate without suppressing the person's sexuality: the person is a mental slave of a gender assignment that doesn't match the biology of the person at birth. And while questions of how, why, and when did the person's mental assignment of gender develop, these questions (of themselves) are not helpful in addressing the problem of in which public bathroom should the person relieve bowels or bladder. The most obvious answer would be in the public bathroom for who the person is dressed. But this answer would assume that the person uses a stall and not simply a hole in the floor (as in European restrooms) over which the female squats and into which the male directs urine.

There are reasons for requiring a person to use the public restroom appropriate to the "plumbing" of the person, not necessarily the plumbing of the infant at birth. There are reasons for socially insisting that a person suppress his or her sexuality if that sexual behavior is inappropriate for the biological gender of the person. Yes, such suppression would "deny" an apparent human right to the person. The person would seem to be mentally harmed ...

In fall 1973, while still living on the Oregon Coast, I stopped by a neighbor's to discuss a bear that was getting into our shared apple orchard ... the neighbor was raising a late season bull calf for meat: his spring calves were already five hundred pounds. And this late bull calf was being weaned and was looking for anything he could suckle. He went to a male spring calf and tried to suckle the spring calf's penis. The neighbor's eight year old son, standing beside his father, said, "Daddy, look. That's disgusting." But my neighbor said to his son, "Don't knock it until you try it."

I don't think I ever spoke to my neighbor again. Of course, a few months later I had relocated to Alaska's Kenai Peninsula, but even if I had remained, I don't believe I would have had anything to do with him; for I felt what he said could do lasting (so-called) damage to his son. ... I don't know that it did—and I am certain that America's present attitude towards homosexuality would not consider a male who was sexually interested in other males to be mentally "damaged." But for Christians (Jews and Muslims) the problem of Moses remains. For me, the problem of Moses remains.

In the movement from physical to spiritual—from a physical nation of Israel that is circumcised in the flesh to a spiritual nation of Israel that is circumcised of heart—Christians have an example of how they are to handle the Lord's commands given to Moses concerning human sexuality:

If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

If a man lies with his father's wife, he has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.

If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death; they have committed perversion; their blood is upon them.

If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them.

If a man takes a woman and her mother also, it is depravity; he and they shall be burned with fire, that there may be no depravity among you. If a man lies with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal.

If a woman approaches any animal and lies with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them. (Lev20:10–16 emphasis added.)

Under Moses, if a man were to lie with his father's wife, he and she were to be stoned, executed; for they need no trial. Their sexual liaison is enough to justify their execution.

But when Paul encounters this situation in the assembly of saints at Corinth—the situation being condoned by the assembly apparently out of the assembly's expression of “love for the sinner while hating the sin”—Paul doesn't abandon Moses, but modifies Moses to fit the situation that *Israel* no longer is the nation circumcised in the flesh, but the nation that is to be circumcised of heart ... in other words, the presence or absence of a penis no longer matters (see Gal 3:25–29, especially *v.* 28), but the thoughts of the mind and the desires of the heart matter. And these thoughts need to conform to what Moses commanded.

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? (1 Cor 5:1–6)

Instead of stoning and physically executing the man and his father's wife, Paul commanded the assembly at Corinth to deliver the man to the Adversary for the destruction of the flesh, thereby effectively spiritually executing the man, thus preventing him from entrance before God as a firstfruit. The man might be saved in the great White Throne Judgment, the resurrection after the Thousand Years, but the man can continue in a course that would have led to the man's resurrection at the beginning of the Thousand Years [the Millennium].

Of course if the man genuinely repents, he would have been invited back into fellowship in the assembly of the saints ... what would have happened if no one had ever known the man and his father's wife were carrying on? Would they have “sneaked” into the resurrection of firstfruits? No, they would not have. They would have squandered their salvation. And this is the status of all sexually active unmarried individuals with whom Christ presently has interaction.

Homosexuality is a transgression against the flesh of the person, but so too is fornication (cohabitation without the benefit of lawful marriage). Therefore, the Christian who would not tolerate a cross-dressing man to enter the Christian's fellowship should be equally zealous in purging fornication from the fellowship. But this doesn't seem to be the case: the grown offspring of the assembly's members can live together without being married to one another because as *Christians, we must love the sinner but not the sin*. Then what is wrong with "loving" the transgender individual? Or does Christian love only extend to fornication?

What Christians need to understand is that the Lord told Moses, when Israel was backed up against the Sea of Reeds, to stand still and watch the Lord take care of Israel's "problem"; that Moses was to tell the people to move forward; the Lord wasn't going to tell Israel anything. The Lord was going to deliver Israel after Israel moved forward upon Moses' command.

Today, few people have been set "free" from mental slavery to the Adversary, the still-reigning prince of this world. Most of humanity remain serfs of the Adversary, held in slavery not by iron chains but by the appetites of the flesh: the person has grown accustomed to eating regularly and sleeping indoors. And as if prisoners of the state that are fed whatever a state dietician has deemed adequate to maintain a minimum level of health, most Americans, most individuals living in Western nations, eat whatever is available in grocery stores, supermarkets; sleep in beds with whomever they chose within a narrow range of possible individuals, and produce children through biological procreation infrequently, much less often than sexual relief is obtained. Thus, even within Western Christendom, little consideration is given to not working as a employee of the System; of limiting sexuality to the marriage bed; of permitting the spiritually dead to bury the physically dead of themselves.

It is at this time of year when those *Christians* genuinely born of spirit through possessing the indwelling spirit of Christ need to stand still and see if they or the world around them has been spinning out of control. Most will find that it is they that spin rapidly around a core of beliefs that are not of God, Father or Son. Most will find that the earth is really standing still, waiting for them to slow down, unwind, trust God, and then move forward into impossible territory.

None of our problems have been as serious as Christ Jesus' problems were on the Preparation Day for the Passover in 31 CE ... on the cross and about ready to die, Jesus cried out, "'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'" (Matt 27:47).

What Jesus cried out was, however, only the physical portion of the psalmist's thought-couplet:

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? [physical]

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

[spiritual]

(Ps 22:1)

Jesus was already saved spiritually: He did not need to ask, *Why are you so far from saving Me*; for He was spiritually saved when the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] descended upon Him and entered into Him (Mark 1:10) when He was raised by John

from the waters of the Jordan. But in this world, His fleshly body still had to experience the things of the flesh, with one of these things being death.

No Christian is greater than Christ Jesus. Every Christian can expect to be physically overwhelmed upon occasion, especially immediately before Passover. It is at this time when we as Christians need to stand still and see if it is us or if it is the world that is spinning out of control.

This particular political season in the United States of America discloses to the world how far even American Christendom is from God the Father; for where is *Christian compassion* for the hungry, the persecuted, those mentally enslaved by biology? Where is common decency one for another? It is no longer evident within or without greater Christendom; for outside of Christendom, Islamic fundamentalists behead lawless Christians, with God supporting neither the *jihadist* nor protecting the Christian.

The world is standing still, awaiting the Second Passover liberation of a second nation of Israel, this liberation possibly as near as next year but probably another eight years (or more) in the future; for humanity is not yet as far from God as humanity can get: there is still “goodness” within the cultures of the world. But there is much less than there was fifty years ago.

It is the people that are spinning, spinning, spinning in an ever widening gyre.

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