

Commentary — From the Margins

The Endtime Gospel: The Good News to be Proclaimed

Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. But he answered them, “You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.” / As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?” And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains. / Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But *the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this [τοῦτο] gospel [τὸ εὐαγγέλιον — the good news] of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*” (Matt 24:1–14 emphasis added)

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The end of the age did not come when the first disciples believed it would: Paul writes to the saints at Thessalonica, “Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, ‘There is peace and security,’ then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not

escape. But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief" (1 Thess 5:1-4).

You are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief—the Church should not be taken by surprise as Noah's neighbors were taken by surprise when the foundations of the deep burst forth and it began raining and flooded the world. Christians ought not be taken by surprise when the world assures them that peace and safety is at hand. Rather, they ought to be able to read the signs of the times, the green-tip showing on fig branches, and realize that Jesus' return is near in time, not another two millennia away.

But—and this is a large caveat—even though the Church at Thessalonica had no need for Paul to write more to them about the coming of Christ, Paul had to write more to this same Church. And this applies equally to Christendom today: nothing more should need to be written to saints about the coming of Christ, more needs to be written for instead of walking in idleness as some at Thessalonica as they awaited Jesus' return, Christendom today walks in lawlessness. Christians neglect walking uprightly before God. They slouch toward the lake of fire. Using grace as their covering, they continue in willful sin, not working to feed themselves spiritually but mooching off of Christ Jesus' good will as they construct no covering of righteousness for the day when the Son of Man is revealed and grace ends.

When he should not have had a need to write again to the saints at Thessalonica, he had to write again for some began to walk in idleness as they awaited Christ's return:

Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. *For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.* For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. (2 Thess 3:6-12 emphasis added)

Christians ought to imitate Paul spiritually as well as physically, and not be idle in their striving to walk uprightly before God. The Christian need not worry that he or she will actually walk uprightly, but the human infant who does not strive to physically walk upright when young will not walk upright when old, and so it is with inner sons of God that do not walk with legs but with thoughts and desires of the heart.

Before further addressing the saints' idleness and the movement from physical idleness to spiritual idleness, a point needs to be affirmed: Paul had the right to ask for support from those whom he taught, but he did not ask for

support so as to undermine the ministries of false apostles and deceitful workman who claim to work on the same terms as Paul worked—and so it is today. Faithful teachers of God do not ask for support even though they have the right to ask. It is false apostles and deceitful workmen who ask for support. For those who are false do not work for God and can expect no support from the Father and the Son; therefore, those who are false must, as ravenous wolves, ask [beg] for support from the flocks of God while spiritually devouring the very ones who provide them with support.

Today, without exception, every ministry that asks for support is not of God, who knows that His servants have needs that must be met. But it is His responsibility to provide those needs: it is not the expectation or responsibility of the one who honestly labors for Him to ask other men and women for support.

God may well give a person the desire to support the ministry/ministries of His servants. That is between God and the person; for it is God who gives rewards, not the ministry that receives support. Or God can use other means to support a ministry, such as giving His servants secular jobs for which they didn't know to ask. Or He can just make things “work out” for His servants. Regardless, it is God's responsibility to provide for those who work for Him; it is the responsibility of His servants to labor diligently at delivering His gospel to a blind world that walks in the predawn darkness of the end of an age and the dawning of a new age.

The servants of God are not in darkness, for they know what will happen. Saints are not in darkness, for they now know more than Paul knew for the time is indeed near ... yet saints are in darkness for they have listened to false teachers for decades and centuries. Saints need to quit listening to any teacher of Israel who asks for support. If they would do just this one thing, they would no longer walk in darkness as they walk today.

The Thessalonians to whom Paul wrote saying they had no need to have anything written to them concerning the coming of Christ actually did need more written to them: in the second letter Paul wrote to them, he says,

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way. *For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed*, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. (2 Thess 2:1–3 emphasis added)

The temple is not a physical building, but the assembly of living saints. The lawless one [or man of perdition] doesn't take a seat in a physical temple, but in the Church. This lawless one will not exalt himself against “Christ Jesus,” but will preach another Christ and a foundation of men, not the “Christ” that is the First of the firstfruits and who built on the commandments of God. This man of perdition will understand propaganda; he will condemn those in government

who today strive to manipulate the collective mind of the masses. But he will use the same tools and techniques in his attempt to return first America then the world to the *republican* ideals that made the United States of America exceptional in the abstract and one of the world's historically great nations.

The lawless one will sincerely believe the angel inside him, will believe the angel within him is Christ, but that angel possessing him will be the Adversary, the little horn of Daniel chapters 7 & 8. This lawless one is today advocating for Americans to return to God, but not the God of the 1st-Century Church. Rather, the man who will be revealed as the lawless one on day 220 of the Affliction encourages Americans to return to the God of America's founding fathers, none of whom kept the commandments. This lawless one will exalt a humanly written document—the Constitution of the United States—and claim divine inspiration for this **G**rand **O**ld **D**ocument that reflects both the strengths and weaknesses of *the Great Awakening* in America.

It is hardly conceivable that Christendom's rebellion against God on day 220 of the Affliction comes through advocacy for returning to God, but that will be the case for Christians, with very few exceptions, will not submit to God and keep even the least of the commandments, the Sabbath, the outward marker that the Christian strives to walk as Jesus (an observant Jew) walked ... the foundational problem with returning to America's founders is that until the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man, every kingdom, every nation, every government, public or private, in this world exercises authority through the auspices of the Adversary. No national government or international form of governance exists that does not rule through God having consigned all men to disobedience so that He could have mercy on all (Rom 11:32). All governing authority in this world that has come from God (Rom 13:1) comes through the Adversary who can do nothing but utter blasphemous words against the Ancient of Days unless given dominion to rule by the Most High—and he was given that dominion when the Lord drove Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:23), not when they are forbidden fruit a short while earlier (*vv.* 6–7). And his dominion to rule will be taken from him and given to the Son of Man on the doubled day 1260 during the seven endtime years of tribulation.

At the present time, no national government, no corporation, no private company, no church can place one man or woman over another man or woman outside of marriage and the family without “borrowing” authority from the Adversary. Therefore, the foundational documents of the United States of America, while religious in temper and expressing the spirituality of the Great Awakening, are not of God but represent the Adversary's best attempt at making a government of the people and by the people work in this demonstration period that will soon end. And the attempt is a worthy one, if Christians ignore immigrant squalor in 1890s New York City or what happened to Native American peoples or what is presently happening as fiscally irresponsible politicians practice *generational theft* (John McCain's expression). Christians must also ignore the huge foundational defect that permitted slavery. No, the United States might be the best Satan can do in implementing his democratic ideals, but God can do much better. For when the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of

Man, the spirit is also given without measure so that every person will be filled with “life” so that all *Know the Lord* and there will be no need for Christian ministry. Yet, even then the weakness of the flesh will permit Satan when loosed after a thousand years to deceive humankind on the margins of Israel.

Thessalonica: for a Church that had no need to have anything written to them concerning the coming of Christ, this Church needed quite a bit written to them—and so it is with common Christians, who should have no need for anything more to be written to them about the coming of Christ, but who in reality have a great need to have much written to them. For the greater Christian Church has become dull of hearing and unable to grasp those things that are truly hard to explain to spiritual infants. At a time when Christians in the greater Church ought to be teachers, these Christians need someone to teach them again the basic principles of the oracles of God for they are not skilled in the word of righteousness. They have not practiced distinguishing good from evil, but have practiced mingling good with evil as Eve did when she ate forbidden fruit.

A part of the Temptation narrative has been ignored for far too long. The teaching of original sin holds that humankind has been condemned to hell since Eve ate forbidden fruit, but that is not the case: Paul says that sin came into the world through one man (Rom 5:12), Adam, not through one woman who was deceived. Adam was not deceived, but when he saw Eve eat fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and not die, he no longer believed God. Rather, he believed what his eyes saw, and his eyes saw what Eve saw, then saw Eve eat and not die, not realizing that Eve as his wife was “covered” by his obedience as the Church, the last Eve, is today covered by the righteousness of Christ Jesus, the last Adam (1 Cor 15:45; Rom 5:14). Thus, the root of all sin is unbelief—and sin entered the world when Adam no longer believed God.

For Christians, what is not of faith is sin (Rom 14:23); for what is not of faith is unbelief, with *faith* and *belief* sharing a linguistic icon: πιστεῶν (*pisteuo*). For Christians, there is no faith without belief. Therefore, the Christian who does not believe God lacks faith and all he or she does is sin. ... Jesus asked how a person was to believe His words if the person did not believe the writings of Moses (John 5:47), and the answer is that the person will not believe His words and thus lacks faith and all this person does is sin, which is why John says that sin is lawlessness (1 John 3:4). John moves Moses up against Christ and cuts through lawless excuses for not keeping the commandments by writing, “Whoever makes a practice of sinning [of transgressing the law] is of the devil” (v. 8). And this includes pious Colonial preachers who used their pulpits to condemn the man or woman who kept the commandments while encouraging American Colonials to fight for political liberty. Such men are worthy of condemnation in the lake of fire, but Christ Jesus is their judge—and He has already publicly revealed their judgments:

Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but *the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven*. On that day [when Jesus returns] many will say to me, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out

demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?”
And then will I declare to them, “*I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.*” (Matt 7:21–23 emphasis added)

Those Colonials who preached without being called by God to preach; those Colonials who preached rebellion against God and against the Crown; those Colonials and Moderns who have done mighty works in Jesus’ name but who did not or do not teach the saints to keep the commandments, all of them—all of these workers of iniquity will be denied when judgments are revealed. Just as Noah, Daniel, and Job have had their judgments revealed to Israel (see Ezek chap 14), all who do mighty works in Jesus’ name yet do not teach the saints to keep the commandments as a foundational aspect of faith, of belief in God, will be denied by Christ Jesus and cast into the lake of fire. Yes, there is a real lake of fire that comes when Jesus returns and is hot enough to not merely roast saints but to destroy them so that nothing remains.

Sin did not enter the world when Eve ate forbidden fruit, for she was deceived. Christians today, with very few exceptions, are genuinely deceived: they want to do what is pleasing to God, and they make for themselves fig-leaf loin cloths because they know they are naked—their Colonial teachers told them that they are naked and condemned to hell except for the grace of God—but their loins are no longer covered even by fig leaves as they openly parade their lawlessness before God, taking part in political rallies on the Sabbath ... in typology, the Church is presently in a period that is the mirror image of the very short while between when Eve ate forbidden fruit and when her covering of obedience ended with Adam also eating. The moment between when Eve ate and when Adam ate physically represents the heavenly moment—there is but the one moment in timelessness—between when sin entered this world and when grace ends with the stripping away of the mantle of Jesus’ righteousness to reveal the naked Son of Man, Head and Body.

The very short while—no longer than a few moments in the Garden of Eden—between when Eve ate forbidden fruit and when Adam ate is the mirror image of the very long period between when sin entered this world and when the seven endtime years of tribulation begin. The short while that it took Adam and Eve to make fig-leaf loincloths to cover their nakedness represents these seven endtime years, and as the Lord God pronounced judgment first on the serpent, then on Eve, and then Adam, the Messiah will first condemn the tares (the seed of Satan — 1 John 3:8, 10), all causes of sin and all lawbreakers to fire (Matt 13:41–42) before revealing the judgments of the righteous.

The mirror image of the Lord walking in the Garden in the cool of the evening is the Son of Man walking in the cool of the dawn of a new day and a new age.

Throughout the last few years of his ministry, Herbert Armstrong returned time and again to the Temptation Account and virtually wore out his disciples with the account, but he could never express what the spirit was inwardly telling him for he didn’t understand spiritual birth and was set enough in his ways that he was unable to move beyond his fifty-year-old understanding of being born of God. But that brief “moment” between when Eve believed the serpent and ate forbidden fruit and when Adam ate and both knew they were naked represents

the *unchanging moment* (unchanging because heaven is timeless) in heaven between when sin [unbelief] entered this world and when the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:30) in a time like when Noah entered the Ark (on the 10th day of the second month — cf. Gen 7:4, 11).

Eve would give birth to two sons, Cain and righteous Abel ... at the beginning of the seven endtime years, the last Eve (i.e., the Christian Church) will give birth to two sons, a righteous Abel; then 220 days later at Christmas of the year of the Second Passover, this last Eve will give birth to an angry Cain that will kill his righteous brother. Then halfway through these seven endtime years, the last Eve will give birth to a third son, a spiritual Seth, the third part of humanity (from Zech 13:9) that only has to endure to the end in faith to be saved.

But it is in that very short while between when Eve believed the serpent and ate and when Adam ate that typologically represents the course of human history from sin entering the world through Adam's unbelief to the beginning of the seven endtime years of tribulation, with Genesis chapter four representing the first 1510 days of these seven endtime years, that is through the third part's rebellion against the Antichrist, the 1290 days that the prophet Daniel referenced from when the abomination that makes desolate is set up (Dan 12:11 — 220 days + 1290 days = 1510 days). The spiritual Seth must also give birth to a son, with this "son" represented by Enosh and by the people beginning to call upon the name of God (Gen 4:26) when the third part rebels against the Antichrist.

The man of perdition is not the Antichrist, but the time-linked shadow and type of the Antichrist. The man of perdition is a human being possessed by the Adversary whereas the true Antichrist is the Adversary cast from heaven and given the mind of a man.

When the old dragon, Satan the devil, is cast from heaven (Rev 12:7–10), the whole world worships him (Rev 13:4) for he comes claiming to be "Christ." But as Christians rebelled against God 220 days into the Affliction, the third part of humankind will rebel against the Antichrist 250 days after he comes claiming to be the Messiah. And in this rebellion, this third part as the spiritual reality of Seth will give birth to a son that will be saved by enduring to the end, the good news that must be proclaimed to the world before the end comes (Matt 24:13–4).

The concept of the coming of Christ being like labor pains has mirror image presentations in the Affliction and Endurance of Christ ... unlike when labor pains preceded the birth of Cain, then of Abel, Zion shall give birth to her children before her labor pains come upon her (Isa 66:7–8) at the very beginning of the Affliction; i.e., at the Second Passover and at the Rebellion or great falling away (2 Thess 2:3). But in the Endurance of Christ when the kingdom has been given to the Son of Man, childbirth will come at the very end and the labor pains of birth will precede the glorification of the saints.

As Zion gave birth to a spiritual Abel followed by a spiritual Cain 220 days later in the Affliction, in the Endurance the Church will give birth to a spiritual Seth followed by a spiritual Enosh 250 days later, thereby making the 30 days between Passover and the Second Passover of importance. But by placing these 30 days outside of the seven endtime years, God has chosen not to yet reveal what

occurs during them to His servants except through what Jesus said in Matthew 24:5–7.

As the left hand is the mirror image of the right hand and the thumb of the upright palm is on the left side of the left hand, the thumb of the upright palm is on the right side of the right hand. This is the pattern for the birth of Israel: the liberation of Israel from indwelling sin and death occurs at the beginning of the Affliction and is followed by the labor pains of this liberation at which common Christians are born of God, with this liberation from indwelling sin and death forming the left hand enantiomer of Israel being raised in glory when the Lord descends from heaven with a flash of light and the sound of the trumpet of God at the end of the Endurance, with the labor pains of the saints' mortal fleshly bodies putting on immortality occurring before this second spiritual birth of the firstfruits.

Christians have no more need of anyone writing to them about the coming of Christ than the saints at Thessalonica had of Paul writing a second epistle to these saints—Paul wrote a second epistle to the Thessalonians because they just didn't get it; they didn't understand what they thought they did. While the saints at Corinth too readily accepted the message of any preacher or evangelist or apostle who came to them (2 Cor 11:2–4), the saints at Thessalonica were too willing to accept Paul's words that the coming of Christ was at hand:

For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For ... the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words. (1 Thess 4:15–18)

Yes, the saints at Thessalonica too readily accepted Paul's assurances that Jesus' return was soon to occur. But then, why shouldn't they have accepted Paul's words? Understanding of the will of God had been given to Paul (Acts 22:14) ... but Paul didn't understand the prophecies of Daniel that were sealed and kept secret until the time of the end (Dan 12:4, 9 *et al*). Paul couldn't know what would be revealed at the time of the end; Paul only thought he was living in the time of the end.

Paul never understood what has been revealed to the saints since Daniel's visions were unsealed in 2002 CE. Therefore, it was perfectly reasonable for Paul to believe that Jesus would shortly return, but not before the great falling away occurred and the lawless one was revealed. And for a great falling away to occur, there must be many converts who are like those in Asia: "You [Timothy] are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes" (2 Tim 1:15). Paul also wrote, "For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil 3:18).

What Paul saw in his own life and ministry fulfilled what he knew had to happen concerning a great falling away, but the Apostasy as Paul understood it was far too small of an event. A third of humankind would be "Christian" before

the Apostasy would occur, and this third would be dead before being made alive and rebelling against God as a third of the angels did not exist, then were created [made alive] before rebelling against God. In Christians between the Second Passover and the Apostasy, men and angels get to see in type the creation of angels followed by the deception of the Adversary and finally the rebellion of angelic sons of God.

Disciples who today hold that Scripture is a closed text are like Sadducees and Pharisees in the 1st-Century, when Scripture was a closed text by the editing work of the Great Assembly shortly after a remnant of Israel returned to Jerusalem from earthly Babylon.

How can the visions of Daniel be unsealed without the production of a text that unseals them? The Book of Revelation is such a text, but John's vision that he saw and that he recorded is yet to occur, a conceptual oxymoron. How can what was described 1900 years ago not have yet occurred? The "how" is in John saying, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev 1:10) — John was transported forward in time to when the events he described would soon occur; he was transported forward to when the kingdom of this world would be given to the Son of Man. He was called in vision into the timeless realm of heaven where, from the perspective of this world, he saw what will be in the future, now near future.

The end of the age was upon Noah and his sons when they first started filling the Ark with animals, and the end of the age is upon the Church when it starts filling the Ark of the Covenant with disciples—

The end of age comes with the Second Passover liberation of circumcised-of-heart Israel from indwelling sin and death. The seven endtime years (2520 days) are the transition between this present age and the age to come: these years include the fall of Babylon (the Affliction, the first 1260 days) and the rise of the Son of Man (the Endurance, the second 1260 days).

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The seventh installment will begin with section #11.

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