

Commentary — From the Margins

Replacement Theology—Part Two

I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God [θεός] was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. ... Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. Therefore let everyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. (1 Cor 10:1-6, 11-12)

3.

Israel's rebellion against God took place as an example that *Christians* might not desire evil ... but what if *Christians* desire to practice evil? What if Christians, in believing lawless teachers who have done mighty works in the name of Jesus (Matt 7:21-23), spurn practicing righteousness even though sin has no dominion over them? Will Israel in the wilderness not then serve as a shadow or type of these Christians rather than as merely an example?

Did Israel in the wilderness desire to practice evil? Did the nation that saw Pharaoh's army drowned in the Sea of Reeds knowingly choose not to believe God? Did this nation of 600,000 adult men, hardened to the rigors of physical exertion through a lifetime of toil to Egyptian overlords, fear to believe God—or did they even think such thoughts? Were their minds instead preoccupied with the immediacy at hand, this immediacy being the need to arrive somewhere and get settled back into a routine, the need for some other food beside manna, the need for a house rather than a tent, the need to work, earn money, increase flocks and grow crops? Did any Israelite other than Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb see anything wrong with returning to Egypt, a devastated nation without an army, without a functioning infrastructure, but still with flood-irrigated fields and the blessing of the Nile River? Was it not more reasonable to turn back and enslave Egyptians than to continue on and face giants?

Do Christians desire to practice evil when they, because of unbelief, refuse to enter into God's presence when the promise of entering stands as ancient Israel refused to enter into God's rest (Ps 95:10-11) when the twelve spies returned? Or

are Christians even aware of their rebellion against God? And whether Christians desire or do not desire to practice evil, does not Israel's rebellion in the wilderness of Paran (Num chap 14) form the model or type of the Church's rebellion against God, a rebellion of unbelief that becomes disobedience (Heb 3:19; 4:6) through spurning the Sabbath commandment?

After God had pronounced a death sentence on Israel because of its unbelief, the nation acknowledged its sin and attempted to enter God's rest on the following day. For a Christian, attempting to enter God's rest on the following day is Sunday observance.

For ancient Israel, was not attempting to enter God's rest on the following day disobedience, or rebellion against God? It was, wasn't it? And again—and this cannot be emphasized too strongly—to enter God's rest is to enter into His presence, for the "eyes of [YHWH Israel's *Elohim*] were always upon [the Promise Land], from the beginning of the year to the end of the year" (Deut 11:12) as a type of a disciple entering into God's presence through the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9).

As entering into the presence of a human king comes by permission, the right of access into God's house and His courts was extended to the high priest Joshua, high priest under Zerubbabel and a type of one who serves under Christ¹, on the condition that Joshua "walk in [the Lord of hosts'] ways and keep [His] charge" (Zech 3:7). This conditional right of access was given by permission and was only extended to Joshua and his friends. The writer of Hebrews says, "For if Joshua [the servant of Moses] had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whosoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his" (4:8-10) on the seventh day (v. 4).

In the wilderness of Paran, repentance did Israel no good (Num 14:40-41; Deut 1:34-36, 41-43). And what's seen is there comes a day when no more rebellion will be tolerated (2 Thess 2:3, 11-12); when repentance will not be accepted; when Christians are held fully accountable for their transgressions of the laws of God.

Israel serves as an example for Christians: in the wilderness of Paran, God would no longer accept Israel's repentance. And later, when the children of the nation that left Egypt profaned God's Sabbath, God "gave them statutes that were not good and rules by which they could not have life, and [He] defiled them through their very gifts in their offering up all their firstborn, that [He] might devastate them" (Ezek 20:25-26). ... Think about what the prophet Ezekiel records! After decades of rebellion against God, God gave to Israel statutes and rules by which the nation could not have life. These Israelites, now believing they are serving God in pure religion (because God has given them these statutes), cause their firstborns to pass through fire, a practice by which Israel's 8th-Century

¹ Today Christ Jesus is Israel's high priest, but after the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:30), Christ will no longer bear the sins of Israel, a nation then liberated from bondage to sin and death—and a nation then delivered into the hand of the man of perdition for the destruction of the flesh. And another will serve as high priest as Christ becomes the reality of Zerubbabel, whose hand will finish the construction of the heavenly temple. The one who will serve as high priest has filthy garments, a statement that does not pertain to Christ Jesus.

BCE migrations can be traced. It never dawned on these Israelites that they should be appalled by the heinousness of what they were doing. Rather, they remained more faithful in observing these statutes by which they could not have life than they ever were in keeping the commandments Moses gave them, commandments by which they would live.

Why would God do that? Why would He give Israel statutes and rules that caused Israel to continue its heinous practice of sacrificing its firstborns? Why would a loving God, who is the same today as yesterday, cause Israel to burn its firstborns by passing them through fires dedicated to Molech? That is certainly not the concept of God taught within Christian orthodoxy, which holds that the same deity who gave to lawless Israel statutes by which Israel could not have life is the loving God who does not ask Christians to keep His commandments, the ones He gave from atop Mount Sinai ... if what Christian orthodoxy teaches were true, God is a grievous respecter of persons, hating His lawless firstborn son (Ex 4:22) while loving equally lawless sons of God covered by grace.

The answer most likely received to the question of why would God give Israel statutes by which the nation could not live yet not give to equally lawless Christendom similar statutes is that *it's a matter of Election*; for Paul writes, "And not only so, but also Rebecca had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of his call—she was told, 'The older will serve the younger.' As it is written, 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated'" (Rom 9:10-13).

If Jacob is loved, then would not Jacob as Israel (*one who prevails with God*) be the Elect? Esau is certainly not the Elect. And if the Christian Church is now the Elect rather than natural Israel, then is not the Church Israel? There really can be no other conclusion.

But there is a difficulty for Paul identifies disciples as Isaac (Gal 4:21-31), and compares natural Israel to Hagar, the bondwoman who bore Abraham a son by the natural process of a man having his way with a maid. Isaac is the son of promise, the son born to Abraham that does not come by natural means but by the supernatural intervention of God. And if disciples are Isaac, then in the womb of Isaac (Rebecca's womb is Isaac's womb) are at this time both Esau and Jacob—so within Christendom are those disciples who, though covered by grace so that no sin is imputed to them, are today hated by God as Esau was hated while still in the womb. And within this same womb are disciples who, though deceitful, are loved by God. Hence, within Christendom are the many that have been called by the Father and the Son, but of this many few will be chosen (Matt 22:14). Few will be the Elect.

- The Elect are, therefore, a subset of Christendom; they are that portion loved by God, the portion that represents Jacob.
- Isaac does not replace Ishmael as the natural son of Abraham, but rather, from Isaac comes two sons of promise (Gen 25:21), one hated, one loved, whereas from Ishmael would come a great nation of twelve princes (Gen 17:20).

- The covenant God made with Abraham was “established” through Isaac, not Ishmael, with God naming Isaac a year before his birth (Gen 17:21).
- Because Isaac does not replace Ishmael as the natural son of Abraham, the Christian Church cannot replace natural Israel as the natural firstborn son of the *Theos* of Abraham, the *Theos* of Isaac, and the *Theos* of Jacob (Matt 22:32).
- Jacob is not renamed Israel until after he leaves the Promised Land and journeys into the land that will be later named Assyria, a land that typologically represents “death” as Egypt represents “sin,” and returns to wrestle with God and “prevails” by living to tell of having wrestled with God.

The difference between Esau and Jacob isn’t a matter of righteousness, but a matter of valuing the blessings of the covenant enough to strive to obtain these blessings. Initially Jacob strives deceitfully so he has to wrestle with God, be maimed, but he hung on until he legitimately receives the blessing as one who has striven with God and with men and has prevailed (Gen 32:28).

Esau was clothed with his own hair covering so even though he wore clothing he was naturally clothed as a beast is. Jacob had no covering but that which he put on daily as disciples put on the garment of Christ’s righteousness daily. Although both a spiritual Esau and a spiritual Jacob are now clothed in grace, when this mantle of Christ’s righteousness is removed—removed when the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:30)—Esau will not value his birthright enough to further clothe himself in obedience to God, but will, instead, rely upon his natural hair coat to conceal his nakedness. And he will be as a beast [i.e., as spiritual livestock] to God, who molds from the same lump of clay vessels for honorable use and vessels for dishonorable usage, with these latter vessels being vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, endured for a season with much patience (Rom 9:21-23). They are to be broken when the temple of God is dedicated upon Christ’s return; they are as the 22,000 bulls and 120,000 sheep sacrificed were when Solomon dedicated the first temple, the earthly temple that formed the shadow of the heavenly temple of God.

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If God, to cause Israel to return to Him, gave Israel statutes and rules that would cause them to burn their firstborns—a practice Israel “borrowed” from their Canaanite neighbors and a practice against which Moses warned (Deut 18:10) but apparently a practice which God commanded them to continue once they engaged in the practice—then this God who is the same today as He was yesterday will also give spiritually circumcised Israel rules that come from the nation’s traditional transgressions of the law so that this latter Israel cannot have life, but will see its firstborns perish in fire. John writes,

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. ... No one who abides in [Christ] keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen [Christ] or known [Christ]. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as [Christ] is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for

the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of Man appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:4, 6-10)

The *Christian* who practices sinning is no longer of Christ but of the devil, with sinning being the means by which it becomes apparent for all to see who are the sons of God and who are the sons of the devil, as Pharisees were sons of the devil (John 8:44), which doesn't mean that Satan physically sired them but that their mindsets come from the Adversary. So, yes, Christians who practice sinning are as the Jews were who sought Jesus' life: there is no truth in these Christians because there is no truth in their father, the devil. Therefore, as God gave to the children of Israel that rejected His statutes and profaned His Sabbaths (Ezek 20:24) statutes and rules by which this Israel could not have life but statutes that caused Israel to celebrate the fiery deaths of their firstborns, God gave to Christians that rejected His statutes and profaned His Sabbaths traditions by which these sons of God could not have life, traditions that caused early Christians to celebrate their liberty from the Judaizers [*Ἰουδαῖζειν* or *Ἰουδαιῶ* — Gal 2:14, and in the Septuagint, Ester 8:17], so-called heretics that would have disciples walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6). Understand, the Circumcision Faction was included among those whom lawless disciples identified as Judaizers, but this is akin to Osama bin Laden identifying all Americans as infidels thereby making no distinction between Roman Catholics, Jehovah Witnesses, Southern Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, and the Sabbatarian Churches of God. Certainly the faith of Justin Martyr was as far from the faith of the Apostle John as Roman Catholic dogma is from what I write, but to one outside of Christianity such as bin Laden, the distinctions are minor and of no consequence. Likewise, to lawless Christians, the distinction between those who taught disciples to live by the precepts of the Law by faith were minor; and as is usually the case, the worse traits or teachings of a few were ascribed to all "Judaizers."

The Apostle Peter was a Judaizer, for he taught Gentile converts to live as Jews (again, Gal 2:14). So did John, and so did Paul—but what hasn't been understood is that the one who is to live as a Jew is the inner new creature, circumcised of heart by spirit, and this inner new creature is to bring the tent of flesh in which this son of God lives into subjection to the law of God that is now in the mind and heart of the disciple. When this inner new creature successfully brings the tent of flesh in which this son of God dwells into subjection to the laws of God, the tent of flesh will live as an observant Jew, will live as Jesus lived, but will or will not be outwardly circumcised, which is of the tent of flesh and not of the new creature. Outward circumcision can be likened to modifying the house in which a person lives: the modification doesn't affect the righteousness of the resident of the house.

God will deliver Christians who practice sinning and who do not love their brother to their spiritual father for the destruction of their flesh as Paul commanded the saints at Corinth to deliver the one who was with his father's wife to Satan (1 Cor 5:5). And He did deliver the Christian Church into the hand of Satan through those traditions that prevent Christians from having life, with the foremost tradition being the day of the week on which these lawless Christians attempt to enter into God's presence. He also physically delivered the Church to the prince of this world as He delivered the southern kingdom of Israel to Nebuchadnezzar, the physical king of Babylon, when Emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicea and approximately 300 of 1800 bishops dutifully appeared before this Roman emperor.

- As God liberated Israel, His firstborn son (Ex 4:22), from physical bondage to a human king at the first Passover, God will liberate Israel, still His firstborn son but now a nation circumcised of heart, from bondage to sin and death at the second Passover, with this paschal Lamb sacrificed at Calvary.
- Since Calvary, Israel entered one long spiritual night with its midnight hour still not upon the holy nation of God (1 Pet 2:9); for as the lives of Egyptians were given as ransom for Israel in the time of Moses (Isa 43:3), the lives of men will again be given for the ransom of Israel (v. 4) when death angels pass over the land, slaying all firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God.
- But once liberated from bondage to indwelling sin and death through being filled with the Holy Spirit or empowered by the Holy Spirit and thus clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49), Christians will return to sin as Satan's willing servants.
- The first 1260 days of the seven endtime years of tribulation are about the liberation of Israel, the rebellion of Israel, and the delivery by God of the Christian Church to Satan for the destruction of the flesh as Christ, the Shepherd, was struck (Zech 13:7; Matt 26:31).
- The Christian who "finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for [Christ's] sake will find it" (Matt 10:39) when the Lord of hosts delivers saints into the hand of the man of perdition for the destruction of the flesh so that the spirit might be saved when judgments are revealed (*cf.* Zech 13:8; 2 Thess 2:3-12).
- Christians who do not love the truth enough to physically die for it and thus be saved will rebel against God to save their fleshly lives.

The Christian Church as perceived by the world doesn't replace Israel as the holy nation of God, for those Judaizing heretics that keep the commandments of God by faith and not outwardly as a matter of circumcision are all of the Christian Church that is of God. Nevertheless, God will liberate all of the Church from bondage to sin and death so that the thoughts and desires of all who profess to be disciples of Christ can be clearly seen through the acts of the flesh.

But to those endtime Judaizing heretics who are of faith, God will graft in the broken off natural branches of Israel throughout the first 1260 days of the Tribulation.

The writer of Hebrews says, “Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us [those who teach] fear lest any of you [the ones being taught] should seem to have failed to reach it [His rest]. For good news came to us just as to them [those who taught ancient Israel], but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest” (4:1-3) ... the good news of salvation did not benefit the teachers of natural Israel who were like Nicodemus, unable to understand an earthly example of what it means to be born of spirit (John 3:10-12), because these teachers of natural Israel were *not united by faith with those who listened*. And why were they not united in faith? Because though they had a law that would have led to righteousness (Rom 9:31) if pursued by faith rather than through the works of hands (v. 32), Israel never pursued this law by faith for Israel believed that outward circumcision alone was enough to make a person an Israelite and the loved son of God (Rom 2:28-29), just as lawless disciples in the early Church believed that all Judaizers taught Gentile disciples to circumcise themselves, thereby making outward circumcision some form of magical mutilation by which salvation comes to the person. Apparently, because too few disciples understood what Paul taught about being born of spirit (and what Jesus taught before him), both Jewish and Gentile converts attached importance to the mutilation of the flesh. Yet when the lawyer came to Jesus to ask what he must do to inherit eternal life and Jesus asked the lawyer how he read the law (Luke 10:25-26), the lawyer answered correctly: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and will all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself” (v. 27). Jesus told the lawyer, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you shall live” (v. 28). So Israel should have known that righteousness could not be obtained through the works of their hands, but obtained by faith that would have the nation loving God with heart and mind, with the outward display of this love manifest through keeping the precepts of the law.

The “rest” which the nation that left Egypt could not enter (Ps 95:10-11) was the Promised Land, Judea, the land upon which the eyes of God were always set. Thus, except for Joshua and Caleb, the nation that left Egypt could not enter into God’s presence although Moses entered into His presence (Ex 33:14). But even Moses could not look upon the face of God and live, for Moses’ sins caused God to hide His face from Moses (Deut 32:19-20) ... the concept of sin being cause for an immediately executed death sentence is alien to Christians, who, because of the mantle of Christ’s righteousness that covers disciples, are not suddenly struck dead for wrongdoing—and because the mantle of grace delays execution of any death sentence, God gets to see what is inside a disciple’s heart by how the disciple responds after transgressing the law. Does the disciple regard the transgression, repent from wrongdoing, and strive to not again fail to measure up to the expectations of the household of God? Or does the disciple make light of the transgression, blowing it off as *no big deal* for the disciple is covered by grace? Again, within the womb of Isaac are two sons of promise, a spiritual Esau and a spiritual Jacob. The elder, the one who relaxes a commandment of God, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven and will serve his younger brother,

who wrestles with God and prevails, wrestles by striving to keep the commandments in a world consigned to disobedience.

Traditionally, the Sabbath has been the primary shopping day of the week. When transportation was more difficult and more dear in the early decades of the 20th-Century, families went to town to do the majority of their shopping on the Sabbath—for many families in rural America, the weekly shopping trip was the focal point of farm existence, especially for the younger generation that fled farms as soon as they could. But in the post WWII boom, transportation became cheap and reliable. Stores obliged by staying open later in the evenings, then opening on Sunday. The convenience store *7-Eleven* was an innovator, staying open seven days a week until 11:00 pm. However, within a decade or so, major chain stores were open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Shopping occurred at the convenience of the customer, but as U.S. gasoline prices rise to European levels, the trend will likely reverse itself, with fewer and fewer trips made by consumers to brick-and-mortar stores, thereby causing these stores to scale back hours and days when they are open. It should, then, surprise no one when the Sabbath is again the primary shopping day for Americans who profess to be Christians and as such the temple of God.

Christ cleansed the temple at the beginning of His ministry and at the end of His earthly ministry. He will cleanse the temple at the beginning of His endtime ministry, then again three years later when the lives of men are twice given as first ransom for Israel as lives of Egyptians were given for the ransom of His firstborn natural son and then as ransom for the third part of humankind (Zech 13:9) that will be born of spirit when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28). And from what does He cleanse the temple? From buying and selling in the presence of God; from making the Sabbath the busy shopping day of the week; from making Christmas the greatest shopping season of the year.

When the twelve spies returned from the Promised Land, Israel rebelled against God and would not enter into His rest when told to go because of unbelief. Likewise, the Christian Church, because of its unbelief, has rebelled against God, and attempts to enter into God's presence on the following day ... when manna was given (Jesus identifies Himself as the true Bread that has come down from heaven), God said, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily" (Ex 16:4-5). The giving of manna was, then, not just the means of feeding Israel in the wilderness, but a test of Israel to see whether Israel would walk in God's law or not—

But the law was not yet given. How can Israel be tested on something that has not yet been given? And the answer is by whether Israel would rest on the seventh day.

The endtime Christian Church has not yet been liberated from indwelling sin and death and thus clothed with power from on high, the spiritual equivalent to the passing of the death angel over Egypt through the giving of the law, yet it is being today tested by whether it will enter into God's presence on the seventh day, the Sabbath. And what is seen is the wholesale failing of this test. The

Christian Church, to be endtime Israel, must do much better when it is liberated from sin and death or the Church will go en masse into the lake of fire as the reality of ancient Israel passing its firstborns through fire.

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When some of Israel went out to gather manna on the Sabbath (Ex 16:27), God did not order that those found gathering manna to be stoned—

1. Stoning was the prescribed penalty for breaking the commandments written on two tablets of stone: the broken tablets figuratively and literally killed the person breaking the commandments.
2. The law had not yet been given either orally or on two tablets of stone when those found gathering were rebuked by God.

Yet after the Law was given, the man found gathering sticks on the Sabbath was stoned on apparently the same day as when he was put into custody (Num 15:32-36).

Today, in the last of this pre-liberation era (in the last little while before death angels will again pass over all the land), disciples are not condemned to immediate death for breaking the Sabbath even though they have failed the test placed before them, failed because of unbelief. They are as the Israelites were who went out to gather manna on the seventh day—they do their heavy shopping on the seventh day—and God said of those ancient Israelites who gathered on the seventh day, “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? See! The Lord [YHWH] has given you the Sabbath; therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place; let no one go out of his place on the seventh day” (Ex 16:28-29).

The man Jesus of Nazareth said He was the true bread that has come down from heaven (John 6:35, 41, 47-51) ... in the natural world, birth pains precede the birth of a child, but for Zion, the woman representing Israel, birth pains will follow not precede giving birth to a nation in a day (Isa 66:7-8). Zion is the woman who will give birth to a spiritual Cain and a spiritual Abel in a day; to a spiritual Esau and a spiritual Jacob in a day. She is the woman foreshadowed by Eve—and by Mary, mother of Jesus—for her children will be sons of God through the last Adam, a life-giving spirit (1 Cor 15:45). They will not be conceived naturally, but by impregnation through the Holy Spirit. And in a reversal of the natural world, the elder shall serve the younger. But the elder shall also murder and seek to murder the younger because of the younger's righteousness; because the younger will be a Judaizing heretic as far as the elder is concerned. And where this is going is typologically, the shadow and copy of a spiritual thing precedes the spiritual thing (v. 46) and appears as the mirror image of the spiritual thing; hence spiritual labor pains follow birth rather than precede birth as happens in the natural world.

Translating the above into the Sabbath being a test of Israel through the giving of manna on six days of the week as a physical type of Christ coming as the true bread of life that has come down from heaven, the Sabbath remains the test, but it is on the Sabbath that a double portion of “bread” is given to disciples rather than on the sixth day. Therefore, the Christian who does not enter into God’s presence on the Sabbath is as the natural Israelite who did not gather twice as much manna on the sixth day and thus went hungry on the Sabbath—the

Christian who does not appear before God on the Sabbath to “eat” of Christ [this is not advocating taking the Passover sacraments of bread and wine weekly] by feeding on His words will go hungry during the week and will slowly starve if this son of God doesn’t sell his *birthright to salvation* to the Adversary for a bowl of pottage as Esau sold his.

The logic for genuine born of spirit disciples being identified as Esau through their refusal to enter into God’s rest on the seventh day is encapsulated in what Jesus said about being the bread of life. Thus, while these disciples are still in the womb of grace, they are hated because they are willing to sell their birthright to the Adversary for bread that will not satisfy, bread that comes from this world, “the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possession” (1 John 2:16), all things that will pass away along with this world that is passing away (v. 17).

The rest that Christians are to enter is outwardly manifest in Sabbath observance, the visible showing of an Israelite entering into God’s presence. And the juxtaposition of Israel being the nation that left Egypt, carried by the Lord “as a man carries his son” (Deut 1:31), not believing the Lord but rebelling against Him so that this Israel could not enter into His rest with the Christian Church not believing the Lord but rebelling against Him—the Church being the nation that left sin, carried by the Lord as children of God, but rebelling against Christ through rejecting His “Jewish” commandments and profaning His “Jewish” Sabbaths and thereby returning to sin—will see this latter Israel burning its firstborns in the lake of fire, the second death, as it, too, cannot enter into God’s presence.

Israel continues as the holy nation of God even though the nation [i.e., the children that entered Judea] shrank in size down to one man, Jesus of Nazareth, as the reality of only one natural Israelite that left Egypt entering into the Promised Land, this one natural Israelite being Joshua, the servant of the man Moses [Caleb was of Esau, but had left his parentage to join with Israel].

In what would seem to be an oxymoron, the Christian Church is not Israel even though it includes all of endtime Israel; for the Church has become an instrument of the devil through its voluntary disobedience, manifest through the day on which it attempts to enter into God’s presence. Yes, this is true: with very few exceptions, the Christian Church is today of Satan, whose ministers appear as servants of righteousness (2 Cor 11:14-15) but inwardly are liars and ravenous wolves intent upon devouring the flocks of God, beginning with the flocks’ wallets.

Today, two schisms divide the sons of God from the sons of the devil. The first and great schism is the practice of sinning, of transgressing the commandments of God; for to break one commandment is to break the commandments (Jas 2:10) thus weekly breaking the Sabbath commandment causes Christians to visibly practice sinning.

But there is a second schism that is like the first: not having love for one’s brother—and Sabbatarian disciples divided themselves by this schism into those who are of God and those who are of the devil; for no flock within greater Christendom has less love for their brothers than do Sabbatarian disciples who believe they possess all of the “truth.”

The Christian Church has profaned God's Sabbaths in a manner spiritually equivalent to how the children of Israel in Judea profaned God's Sabbaths—when the Christian Church attempts or has attempted to enter into God's presence, it has not first cleansed itself by removing from itself evil, disobedience, rebellion against God, oppression of the poor and of the weak. Instead, it makes many prayers and sings many hymns and in weak homilies, it professes love for Christ. In candlelight vigils it protests the evils of this world, but then it takes political favors and bribes from the prince of this world, charges usury to the poor, warehouses widows and widowers in nursing homes where they are left to die alone, and auctions off its vote in democratic elections to "the lowliest [basest] of men" (Dan 4:17). It looks like the world, acts like the world, but insists that it is not of this world but of heaven.

God said to Jerusalem at the time of its Babylonian captivity that Samaria was its older sister and Sodom was its younger sister (Ezek 16:46) even though Samaria had gone into captivity more than a century earlier and Sodom had been destroyed by fire in the days of Abraham. What is seen is that as there shall be an endtime holy city of Jerusalem, there shall also be an endtime Samaria and an endtime Sodom, to which God has already said:

Hear the word of the Lord,
you rulers of Sodom!
Give ear to the teaching of our God
you people of Gomorrah!
"What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?
says the Lord;
I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams
and the fat of well-fed beasts;
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
or of lambs, or of goats.
"When you come to appear before me,
who has required of you
this trampling of my courts?
Bring no more vain offerings;
incense is an abomination to me.
New moon and Sabbaths and the calling of convocations—
I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly:
Your new moons and your appointed feasts
my soul hates;
they have become a burden to me;
I am weary of bearing them.
When you spread out your hands,
I will hide my eyes from you;
even though you make many prayers,
I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.
Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,

learn to do good;
seek justice,
correct oppression;
bring justice to the fatherless,
plead the widow's cause. (Isa 1:10-17)

God cannot abide iniquity or lawlessness coupled to solemn assemblies dedicated to Him. God cannot abide rebellion against Him when Israel attempts to enter into His presence. And the Christian Church practices rebellion against God—practices sinning—when it attempts to enter into His presence on the following day, the day after the Sabbath.

This “Sodom” to whom the prophet Israel writes is the children of Israel—

Following the transgressions of Solomon, king of Israel, the children of Israel divided into the northern house of Israel or kingdom of Samaria, and the southern house of Judah or kingdom of Jerusalem. Both houses of Israel practiced sinning, with only occasional and temporary lapses into obedience. Thus, not all who had descended from Israel belonged to “Israel” (Rom 9:6) throughout this period; for Israel means some form of *“one who prevails with God,”* and those natural descendants of the patriarchs who do not prevail with God but continue in their deceitful and lawless ways do not belong to “Israel” regardless of their biological descent.

The polis of Sodom in which Lot lived serves, for the prophet Isaiah, as a shadow and type of a latter Sodom that will be the younger sister of Jerusalem ... the sins of Jerusalem’s sister Sodom and her daughters were pride, excess of food and prosperous ease but not aiding the poor and needy, being haughty and doing an abomination before God (Ezek 16:49-50), so God removed them when He saw the abomination—and the mingling of past and future when God “will restore their fortunes, both the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters” (v. 53) has Sodom not being the city in which Lot lived but rather the Christian Church as the younger sister of Jerusalem.

When the Lord, through the prophet Isaiah, condemns Sodom for mingling iniquity with the holy convocations of God, readers do not see new moons, Sabbaths, or holy convocation disappearing through being abolished. Rather, the Israel identified as “Sodom” is condemned for how it observes these Sabbath days, for the reality of a Sabbath is, again, entering into the presence of God—and God will turn His back to those who oppress the poor or who make a practice of sinning.

All of this reduces down to as not all who naturally descended from Israel belonged to Israel, not all of the Christian Church belongs to Christ and by extension, to Israel. Therefore, what is seen is that natural Israel forms the shadow and type of the Christian Church ... the Christian Church does not supersede Israel as the holy nation of God, but continues on as the Israel that is the holy nation (1 Pet 2:9) of God. There is no replacement of Israel by the Christian Church, which is—as Jesus said of the Jewish leaders of His day—of the devil, having made its father the devil through its practice of sinning or transgressing the commandments of God, with the Sabbath commandment being the principle commandment that it visibly breaks. And as a few within Israel were

of God throughout the generations [7,000 in Elijah's day], there are a few within the Christian Church in every generation who are of God.

Taking all of this a step farther, what the Lord delivered to the prophet Ezekiel about restoring the fortunes of Jerusalem, Samaria, and Sodom has both Samaria and Sodom being daughters of Jerusalem in the future as opposed to sisters:

For thus says the Lord God: I will deal with you as you have done, you who have despised the oath in breaking the covenant, yet I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish for you an everlasting covenant. Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you take your sisters, both your elder and your younger, and I will give them to you as daughters, but not on account of my covenant with you. I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the Lord, that you may remember and be confounded, and never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I atone for you for all that you have done, declares the Lord God. (Ezek 16:59-63)

The concept of the Christian Church being the offspring of Jerusalem is seen in Revelation:

And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. ... She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, times, and half a time. The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (Rev 12:1-2, 5, 13-17)

The woman is a sign in heaven, not here on earth, but it was Israel here on earth that gave birth to Jesus of Nazareth who was caught up to God and to His throne. So Israel is not merely a nation here on earth that can be likened to the waters of humanity, or the armies of earthly nations. The Sea of Reeds swallowing the armies of Pharaoh is a type (Ex 15:12) of the split Mount of Olives (Zech 14:3-4) swallowing the armies surrounding Jerusalem at the end of the age. And what becomes increasing apparent is that Israel leaving Egypt is a shadow and type of endtime Israel leaving sin and death, with Assyria now representing death, the fourth horseman of the Apocalypse, in a manner like Egypt representing the sin and being the third horsemen that makes merchandize of both the early barley harvest and the latter wheat harvest of the Promised Land.

The “rest of the woman’s offspring” are the oil and the wine, the processed fruits of the Promised Land, that sin cannot harm (Rev 6:6).

The portion of endtime Israel that constitutes the 144,000 virgins (Rev 14:1-5) is separate from “the rest of her offspring” (Rev 12:17) ... together, of today’s Israel, natural and spiritual, a remnant of the woman’s offspring [Christ Jesus is the offspring, the male child caught up to heaven] and the 144,000 cross from the first half of the seven endtime years of tribulation into the last 1260 days. And though Sabbatarian disciples today and in the future will identify themselves as the entirety of the true Christian Church, Israel is larger than just the offspring of the woman. But only that portion of Israel that follows Christ Jesus belongs of Israel.

As for the visible Christian Church: its father is the Adversary, and even after a third of humankind is slain for a second time, the remainder of humankind will “not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols” (Rev 9:20). They are evildoers, the spiritually filthy of this world—and this is not how they perceive themselves so much work must be done to get these “Christians” to walk as Jesus walked.

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