

Commentary—From the Margins *More from Augustine*

When words used literally cause ambiguity in Scripture, we must first determine whether we have “mispunctuated” or misconstrued [with reference to Latin, “mispronounced”] them. When investigation reveals an uncertainty as to how a locution should be pointed or construed, the rule of faith should be consulted as it is found in the more open places of the Scriptures and in the authority of the Church. (*On Christian Doctrine*. Bk 3. Section 2. Par 2. Trans by D.W. Robertson, Jr.)

Scriptural ambiguity is to be resolved, according to Augustine at the end of the 4th-Century CE, by the authority of the greater catholic Churches; hence in the example Augustine uses to show how ambiguity is to be resolved (par #3), that of John 1:1–2, Augustine writes:

This heretical punctuation does not allow that the Word is God: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was,” so the sense of what follows is different: “The Word was in the beginning with God.” But this is to be refuted according to the rule of faith which teaches us the equality of the Trinity, so that we say: “And the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. (*OCD*. 3. II. 3)

In Augustine’s understanding of Scripture, of God, of Christ Jesus, Augustine cannot imagine that the God of the Old Testament—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the God that was the Creator of all things physical (John 1:3)—entered His creation as His unique Son, the man Jesus the Nazarene; that this deity was the *Logos* [*’o Logos*] that was “with” or “of” [*pros*] “the God” [*ton Theon*] in “primacy” [*arche* — no definite article, so not a definite or defining noun]; that this deity became the Firstborn Son of “the God” [*ton Theon*] when the breath or spirit of “the God” descended in the bodily form of a dove and entered into [*eis* — from Mark 1:10] the man Jesus, thereby penetrating Jesus’ fleshly body and spirit as a husband penetrates his wife when two physical people come together for purposes of procreation. Hence, in the third clause of John 1:1, we find *kai Theos en ’o Logos* — “and God was the Logos” ... in this third clause, God/*Theos* does not have a definite article, but shares the definite article for *’o Logos*, thereby grammatically establishing that *’o Logos* is God, but not *the God* [*ton Theon*] of whom or with whom *’o Logos* shared primacy [*arche*]. And we have come to what Paul wrote to the Philippians:

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who though He was in the form of God did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied Himself, taking on the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. (Phil 2:5–8 NRSV)

The rule of faith that Augustine should have applied but either didn't know or didn't understand was *that in the beginning* (which even in English cannot be written without adding the definite article), *God the Father was concealed within the Hebraic Tetragrammaton YHWH which was never pronounced by the faithful of Israel, with "Adonai" uttered in lieu of attempts to pronounce the sacred Tetragrammaton.*

King David understood both Hebraic thought-couplet verse as well the relationship between 'o *Logos* whom he knew as *Yah*, and the conjoined deity of 'o *Logos* and *ton Theon*. For in David's latter psalms, David writes, *Praise Yah* in the natural or physical portion of the thought-couplet and then writes, *Praise YHWH* (sung *Adonai*) in the spiritual portion of the couplet (e.g., Psalm 146).

If <*Adonai*> represents the vowel pointing used by Israel prior to the Deportation for the Tetragrammaton (as is commonly believed), then the four consonants return the Bible student back to John 1:1 and Philippians 2:5-8. The Tetragrammaton would be read silently as [Y^aH] + ^{don} + [Y^{ai}H], with the letter /H/ representing aspiration or breath [*pneuma*] and the signifier /don/ indicating "another such," thereby making the God of Abraham two deities that function/functioned as one deity in a manner analogous to how a husband and wife should function as one unified entity, two being one flesh.

The Tetragrammaton would be *one* in "unity," not numerically—

'O *Logos* and *ton Theon* function/functioned as two deities being "one" deity, not in a triune relationship with their "breaths" [*pneuma Theou* + *pneuma Christou*], but in a relationship analogous to human marriage in a "perfect union," the reason why Matthew's Jesus said,

It was because you were so hard-hearted that Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for *porneia* [a marriage that should not have occurred], and marries another commits adultery. (Matt 19:8–9 NRSV)

'O *Logos* and *ton Theon* will not divorce, but because 'o *Logos* entered His creation as His unique son—not the Son of *ton Theon*—and did not become the Son of *ton Theon* until the breath of the Father entered into Him and returned to Him the heavenly life He ('o *Logos*) had prior to entering His creation as His unique Son. Hence, Jesus prayed, "Glorify me, Father, along with yourself with the glory I had in your presence before the world existed" (John 17:5)

Moses forbid ancient Israel from same-sex relationships; from sexual relations with beasts; from any form of incest, but permitted Israel to divorce. Why? Because God the Creator understood that Israel, as the dark shadow and type of the Christian Church [endtime Israel], would place Him in the position of having to "divorce" Israel and put this people away as an adulterous woman is put away. Probably. But in what position

does this put the greater Christian Church if its shadow is idolatrous Israel? Does it not suggest that the greater Church is also idolatrous? Indeed, it does.

Christendom's idolatry predates Augustine, who truly suffered from a communication breakdown: the "knowledge" that came to Augustine "in thought" (from the 1st paragraph of *OCD's* "Prologue") wasn't from the Lord, but from the Adversary, who, again, deceives the whole world (Rev 12:9), with every person, myself included, being included in the *whole world*. Therefore, what's to say that I'm not deceived, a question that can never be answered to everyone's satisfaction.

I don't ask that anyone believe me and me alone: too many religious types have asked their followers to only believe "the leader," the *prophet*, the *pastor general*. Rather, I would ask that you *prove all things* and hold fast to what you prove is correct. If that means that you're not fully with me, so be it. If you're not with me at all, so be it. I cannot save you. Only Christ Jesus can. And it is to Christ that you will ultimately answer ... what if He asks, *Why didn't you believe my servants?* You can always say, *I didn't think they were of you. After all, they were poorly clothed, destitute, bums. What good thing did they ever do?* What if the glorified King answers, saying, *They warned you to take the Passover sacraments on the Passover.* You can say, *But I'm not a Jew, why would I keep the Passover.* And Christ will answer, *So that I would cover your sins. As it is, your sins condemn you to the lake of fire.*

Augustine sought to instruct students in how to read the Scriptures, but Augustine didn't keep the Commandments, nor the Holy Days of God. Augustine didn't keep the Passover. He didn't know-to. Rather, he thought of himself as a teacher, not one who needed to be taught the foundational principles of God: the physical forms the spiritually lifeless shadow and copy of the things of God, with those things that are physical preceding the spiritual. Thus, a human person is conceived by his/her father in the womb of the woman—a spiritual son of God is conceived by God the Father in the soul of a human person when the spirit of God in the spirit of Christ enters the spirit of the person, with the spirit of the person [in the soul of the person] likened to a spiritual ovum. And once the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] enters the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*], a new spiritual life is conceived, with this *son of God* having life coming from the same moment in heaven as the Father and the Son have life, thereby permitting the newly conceived son of God to enter heaven at a higher level than any angel can ever gain ... sons of God will be greater than angels, created by God in heaven, because they have "life" from and in the same moment as the Father and Son have life; whereas the dynamics of timelessness do not permit the co-existence of "life" and the "absence of life" so that what has life in a particular "moment" (analogous to a physical location) always has life in that moment, but what doesn't have life can never have life in that moment. Therefore, because angels are entities created in timelessness, they cannot enter the moment that existed before they received life; they cannot ascend the mountain of God, but as Israel had to camp around the base of Mount Sinai, angels camp [used figuratively] around the base of the heavenly mountain of God whereas

glorified sons of God, typified by Moses, can ascend and descend this heavenly mountain.

I type words on a computer; I do not write words on sheets of papyrus. I watched men walk on the moon in 1969. I now live on an island that is a three-hour-flight on a Boeing 737 from Anchorage.

The expansion of secular knowledge seems to know no bounds—if I want to know about a subject, I get on the Net and see what I can find. So why should not theological knowledge grow and become more widely available in a similar manner? Why are the theological hands of Christian pastors shackled by what Augustine wrote?

The whole canon of the Scriptures on which we say that this consideration of the step of knowledge should depend is contained in the following books: the five books of Moses, that is Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; one book of Josue, one of Judges, one short book called Ruth which seems rather to pertain to the beginning of Kings; then the four books of Kings and two of Paralipomenon, not in sequence, but as if side by side and running at the same time. These make up the history and are arranged to the sequence of time and the order of things; there are others arranged in a different order which neither follow this order nor connected among themselves, like Job, Tobias, Esther, Judith, two books of Machabees, and two books of Edras. The last two seem to follow the ordered history after the end of Kings or Paralipomenon. Then there are the Prophets, among which are one book of the Psalms of David, and three books of Solomon: Proverbs, the Canticle of Canticles, and Ecclesiastes. For those two books, one of which is called Wisdom and the other Ecclesiasticus, are said to be Solomon's through a certain similitude, since it is consistently said that they were written by Jesus son of Sirach. Nevertheless, since they have merited being received as authoritative, they are numbered among the prophetic books. The remainder are those books called Prophets in a strict sense, containing twelve single books of Prophets joined together. Since they have never been separated, they are thought of as one. The names of the Prophets are Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacue, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zacharias, and Malachias. Then there are four books of the four major Prophets: Isaias, Jeremias, Daniel; Ezekiel. The authority of the Old Testament ends with these forty-four books. The New Testament contains the four evangelical books, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the fourteen epistles of Paul the Apostle, to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, two to the Thessalonians, to the Colossians, two to Timothy, to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two Epistles of Peter, three of John, one of Jude, and one of James; a book of the Acts of the Apostles, and a book of the Apocalypse of John. (*OCD*. Bk 2. Section VIII. Par 13)

Without here proving that Esther is a fictional work or that Genesis isn't what it's purported to be; without debating about whether Canticles is by Solomon or composed even during Solomon's life [Canticles is a three-part play similar to Greek plays from the

6th and 7th Centuries BCE], it is the Book of Acts I want to challenge; for Acts is a classic Second Sophist novel from the late 1st-Century CE or early in the 2nd-Century ... Acts is probably the only Greek novel most Christians have read or will ever read. And Acts had its ending torn away for in the last scene [motif] of Second Sophist novels, the heroine (usually the central protagonist) is reunited with the hero after the heroine has undergone numerous trials, a court scene, imprisonment, and often a ship wreck. In the case of Acts, Paul serves as “heroine” while Christ Jesus is “hero.” In order for Paul to be united with Christ, Paul would have to die in Rome, and then ascend into heaven to be with the Lord ... such an ending would screw up the whole of Christian theology; for Paul will not precede in glory the remainder of the saints (1 Thess 4:15–17). Going back to the earlier discussion concerning *’o Logos* and *ton Theon*, with *Yah* or *’o Logos* being the One by whom and through whom all things were created (again John 1:3), and with “the God” [*ton Theon*] being the one who resurrected Jesus [the unique Son of *Yah*] from death, consider what the Sophist novelist has his *Paul* declare when in Athens:

Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscriptions, “to an unknown god.” What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. *The God who made the world and everything in it, He who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is He served by human hands as though He needed anything, since He himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things.* From one ancestor He made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and He allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for Him and find Him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For “In Him we live and move and have our being” as even some of your own poets have said, “For we too are his offspring.” Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. *While God has overlooked the time of human ignorance, now He commands all people everywhere to repent, because He has fixed a day on which He will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom He has appointed, and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead* (Acts 17:22–31 emphasis added NRSV)

The Apostle Paul knows better than to say what this Sophist novelist has his *Paul* say. First, concerning winking at the ignorance of Athenians, Paul writes to the saints at Rome:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world His eternal power and divine nature, invisible though

they are, have been understood and seen through the things He has made. So they are without excuse ... (Rom 1:18–20 NRSV)

But it is in whom the Sophist novelist has his *Paul* claim to be the Creator of all things where the theological fallacy lay. The Father did not and does not create things physical, and that includes mortal human beings. Yet it was the Father that raised Jesus from the dead albeit not as a mortal man but as an immortal spirit being.

The Greek novelist simply has the wrong deity raise Jesus from death, a truly unforgivable theological mistake.

There are many places where this Second Sophist novelist shows that he didn't understand God, with his failure to understand showing his novel to be just that, a fictional work based loosely on the evangelistic chronology Paul reveals in his epistles. Yet Augustine and a great many Christian pastors today accept Acts as "good history" when in reality, it is bad fiction ... how is God; how is Christ Jesus to counter what Christians believe. They're not, and they are not going to try to set Christianity right before the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel, this liberation being from indwelling sin and death.

For the sake of the demonstration in which all of humanity presently participates, Christians do not really need additional knowledge of God: they need stronger spiritual backbones, greater resolve to do what they know is right, and "space" in which they will or won't believe Christ Jesus. They need to annually take the Passover because Jesus did. They need to keep the Commandments because Jesus did. They don't need arguments about why the "Jesus" of Matthew's Gospel is the indwelling Christ Jesus; nor do they need arguments establishing that Acts is a Greek novel. They need only the moral courage to do what they know is right, even when no one is looking.

My argument is and has been that I was called to reread prophecy in furtherance of an expansion of theological knowledge, not needed for salvation prior to the Second Passover but needed after every Christian has been filled-with and empowered by the holy spirit. Needed was knowledge that a Second Passover liberation of Israel would occur; was certain to occur; that all of greater Christendom would sort itself out during the Affliction [the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years] as either being of Cain or of Abel, with "Abel" murdered by his Christian brothers in Christ.

No evidence really exists showing that Paul was martyred in Rome. He certainly could have been, but hard "evidence" to support that premise doesn't exist.

Carnality causes Christians to want to learn some "new thing," when it isn't the new that has true importance: it is the old, *You shall love your neighbor as yourself*.

For quite a few years, I have been pulling new things from Scripture as I reread prophecy, but in the first year or so after being audibly called to reread prophecy, I had completed the task assigned. I understood that a Second Passover liberation of a second Israel would occur; I proclaimed this good news. I proclaimed this good news again and again. I laid out timelines, gave some details, and was generally ignored even within the Sabbatarian Christian community. Yet because new people "received" me, I continued as

a means of encouraging them so that they would receive the same reward as I will receive.

I was and am today extremely appreciative of those who support what I do. It is my earnest desire that each of you have the right to enter unannounced into God's presence when glorified; so I don't want to see anyone fall by the wayside, assuming the "work" is over. It isn't over. For a while it appeared that we would have to pull some websites that we couldn't afford to keep up without the contributions that had been coming in for years ... sufficient contributions came in late in August that we are again on-line and the major sites have their hosting fees covered for another year.

Our stats program gives us an idea of how much is being read and from where visitors are coming onto the websites ... because of national security concerns, regular overseas e-mail into and out-from this country seems to be monitored. However, if you as an overseas reader have a question or questions, ask; submit them, and we [I] will try to answer them in an on-line piece, e-published for everyone to read. For if one person has a question, there will no doubt be someone else with the same or similar question.

Last evening, just before dark, with its having rained hard for a couple of days and with the tide in, I sat at the mouth of a stream maybe ten feet wide and watched good-size pink salmon push their way through riffles and under a bridge and into the slick water above the bridge. A school of perhaps two dozen pinks seemed to be hurrying to escape the seal just off the mouth of the stream—and I was again reminded why I came here, where groceries have to be ordered on-line and it takes weeks to get conduit lock nuts so that a new electric meter base could be installed. I want to thank those who had the patience to endure the writing/e-publishing drought that came with this move back to the Aleutians. No one really knew who I was when I went to Dutch Harbor in 1979. A few more people know me today through my writings. And to them I say, we moved seven no-tail cats and two dachshunds and quite a bit of "stuff" six thousand miles (a quarter of the way around the world), and we are not yet settled in. There's much mundane work that needs to be done, like repairing broken plumbing and installing a chimney that will withstand 100 mph winds. But it feels good to again be on-line.

In the next Commentary, I want to return to Paul in Rome.

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