

Commentary — From the Margins *Sanctuary Cities*

The cities that you give to the Levites shall be the six cities of refuge, where you shall permit the manslayer to flee ... and [YHWH] spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, then you shall select cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the manslayer who kills any person without intent may flee there. The cities shall be for you a refuge from the avenger, that the manslayer may not die until he stands before the congregation for judgment. ... The avenger of blood shall himself put the murderer to death; when he meets him, he shall put him to death. ... But if he [the manslayer] pushed him [the man who died] suddenly without enmity, or hurled anything on him without lying in wait or used a stone that could cause death, and without seeing him dropped it on him, so that he died, though he was not his enemy and did not seek his harm, then the congregation shall judge between the manslayer and the avenger of blood, in accordance with these rules. (Num 35:6, 9–12, 19, 22–24)

2.

Returning to the concept that life in this world for a person not or not yet born of spirit is analogous to being jailed and released for menial work as “the man” sees fit, with the Adversary being “that man” (the prince of this world, the one who reigns over the mental topography of living entities): a person who has been incarcerated will be looking beyond “work release” and looking forward to again being a free person. For humanity, freedom is escape from death; escape from being confined inside of space-time. Therefore, as a formerly incarcerated person looks forward to the return of his or her civil rights when sentences are served, the Christian not yet born of spirit looks forward to life in “heaven,” an expectation reinforced by the gospel musical tradition.

At a macro level, the earth with its atmosphere is a city of refuge, with heaven simultaneously being the “landscape” of freedom [the spiritual Promised Land] and the community where freedom rings. In Scripture, death is the disease that is “cured” by the indwelling of Christ Jesus, with James writing,

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And **the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.** Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has

great power as it is working. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit. My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that **whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.** (Jas 5:13–20 emphasis added)

The subject undergirding what James writes about the prayers of the righteous is salvation, or being saved from death: the “prayer of faith” doesn’t heal broken arms or cancer, but heals the person from the far worse condition, that being consigned to disobedience and by extension to death from which there is no escape except in the Lord, Christ Jesus, who came from heaven, lived as a man, then returned to heaven, thereby possessing both the glory that was His before the foundation of the *kosmos* was laid (see John 17:5) and the glory of the Father that He received when the spirit/breath of God descended upon and entered into Him in the bodily form of a dove (Mark 1:10).

Two glories. Two spirits holy, *pneuma Christou* and *pneuma Theou* (see Rom 8:9, 11). Plus, the man Jesus would have had the spirit of man [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*] (1 Cor 2:11) that caused Him to know the things of a man.

Possessing the *spirit of Christ* gives to the disciple the mind of Christ [*noun Christou*] (1 Cor 2:16). And in having the mind of Christ, the disciple understands the things of God albeit as a child has the mind of man but understands the things of man as the child he or she is. The Christian disciple understands the things of God as the younger sibling of Christ Jesus that he or she is. Thus, the infant son of God understands the things of God as a spiritual infant would understand them.

For the person with only one indwelling breath of life (*e.g.*, ancient Israelites that formed the shadow and type of endtime, twice-born Israelites), an affliction of the flesh such as Job’s equates to physical enslavement such as Israel’s enslavement in Egypt. Separation of the once-born person with leprosy from the camp of Israel now has theological as well as physical justification; for affliction of the flesh with, say, cancer permits the person to live for a while with a terminal illness. Pneumonia prevents a person from breathing by filling the lungs with fluid; yet the person will continue to live for a while even with a severe case of pneumonia. And so it is with being consigned to disobedience: a sinner will live for a while, but not forever. Thus, the healing that is of Christ Jesus isn’t necessarily of the flesh, but is of the dead spirit of the person [*pneuma tou 'anthropou*] with which every person is born.

The significance of the preceding can be easily missed: a terminal illness such as cancer hastens the inevitable death of the person’s fleshly body, but cannot cause the living inner self of the Elect to die. Thus, a terminal illness—or even beheading—does not effect the truly born of spirit person’s inner self; so there is no spiritual reason for God to prevent the premature death of the fleshly body other than the person [the inner self] hasn’t yet matured to the degree that God desires. Therefore, assuming that the person is mature in spirit, there is no reason for God to prevent the premature death of an Elect’s fleshly body unless God intends for this person to do more work for Him here on earth in the future.

God's M.O.; Christ's M.O., isn't to heal fleshly bodies for the comfort of the person, but to heal the person from death, with any healing of the fleshly body being for the sake of the person being or becoming a witness for the Father and the Son. Therefore, the relationship between the inner self of a person born of spirit and the outer self becomes analogous to the relationship between an ancient Levite and the temple, with the "temple" that Paul mentions (1 Cor 3:16–17) being the assembly of outer selves seen in Sabbath services, and the priesthood serving in this temple being the assembly of living inner selves that forms the *ekklesia* of Matthew's Jesus (Matt 16:18). And about this, Peter writes,

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet 2:9–10)

If the Elect form a "chosen race" for the purpose of proclaiming "the excellencies of Christ," then the Elect are called for a divine mission, being witnesses for Christ Jesus. And as witnesses, a certain spiritual maturity is needed, specifically maturity sufficient to understand the things of God through having the mind of Christ. It is not enough to simply have the mind of Christ. Again, a new born human infant has the mind of a man, but this infant doesn't understand the things of a man such as the way of a man with a woman. Likewise, a newly born son of God has the mind of Christ but doesn't understand the things of God, such as the relationship between the Sabbath and the Promised Land, the Temple and the fleshly body of a human person that is to the inner self as a woman is to the man. In analogy, a disciple's resurrected inner self is to the disciple's previously living outer self as the children of Israel were to the Promised Land of Canaan ... as the children of Israel invaded the land of Canaan behind Joshua [in Greek, *Iesou* — *Jesus*], the inner selves of the Elect enter heaven behind Christ Jesus. But standing between the present and entrance into heaven is the fleshly body of the person that remains consigned to death until the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel.

In ancient Israel, women had no political standing. In typology, the woman represents the fleshly body whereas the man, who had standing in ancient Israel, represents the previously dead inner self. Thus, the nation of Israel numbered in the census of the second year in the wilderness and in the census of the fortieth year reflects the relationship of the Elect's inner "old man" to the inner "new man" that crosses into heaven behind *Jesus* ... the *old man* must die as unbelieving Israel died in the Wilderness of Sin, and the *new man* must choose life and enter the Promised Land while the promise of entering stands [it won't stand forever]. If the "new man" chooses death via unbelief, he too will perish, only in the lake of fire, the second death.

The link between the woman representing the land and the man representing Israel is solid, even if it's tainted by pagan ideology. It is this relationship that forms the central metaphor of Canticles, with the man being King Solomon.

In moving the preceding into a person that serves as the image of heaven itself—the man Jesus in His personhood represented heaven; hence the wound in His side gives a visual image of what happened in heaven when the rebellion occurred—the woman

represents the person's fleshly body and the man represents the inner self; so an injury to the woman [the fleshly body] harms but doesn't threaten the man [the inner self]. There will now be no great spiritual urgency to heal the woman, whom Christ can heal at any time as He healed Peter's mother-in-law: "When Jesus entered Peter's house, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. He [Jesus] touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve Him" (Matt 8:14–15).

The reason for Jesus healing any person's physical body is to enable the person to serve Jesus. If there is not a need for the person's service, there will be no need for Christ to heal the person's fleshly body *unless* He intends to use the person in the future. And this is the reality of physically healing the infirm.

A humanly born person is healed from death through being born anew, born from the indwelling of the spirit of Christ. This doesn't not mean that the fleshly body will not die, but means that since the person inside the fleshly body isn't the "flesh," the inner person by being born again will be healed from the death that came upon all people in the days of Noah.

Consider what David wrote,

O Lord* my God,

I cried to you for help, [physical presentation]

and you have healed me. [spiritual] (Ps 30:2)

*[David would not have uttered the Tetragrammaton]

And Psalm 107:20 is the spiritual couplet of a doubled thought-couplet, with the Word of the Lord being sent out to heal, delivering them from destruction ... spiritually, a healing ministry isn't about healing fleshly afflictions, ailments, serious [cancer] or minor [ingrown toe nails], but is about delivering the person from destruction, with Jesus giving this authority to His disciples:

Jesus came and stood among them [His disciples] and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. **If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.**" (John 20:19–23 emphasis added)

Christian healing ministries grow from charlatans deceiving the spiritually ignorant. For the authority to forgive sins is the authority [power] to heal a person from death, not from cancer ...

Most of the healing Jesus did isn't seen in Scripture—only a few incidents are seen. Actually, most healing came from the spiritual excess of the Father's words that Jesus spoke, "words" too large to be held within human utterance. For as a human person speaks words via modulations of human breath vibrating vocal cords, the words being sound coming from pulses of breath. Move up a level: the Father's words would be modulations of His breath, His spirit [*pneuma Theou*], His glory that He gave to Jesus to speak, with Jesus saying,

Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in Him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees Him who sent me. I have come into the world as

light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For **I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has Himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.** (John 12:44–50 emphasis added)

With the Father giving His words to Jesus for Jesus to speak, the Father figuratively “wrapped” the words Jesus would speak with His, Jesus’, voice in spirit that would be manifested as “works,” notably the works of healing. Hence, Jesus told Jews on the first of the Feast of Dedication, “If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father” (John 10:37–38). ... To believe the works Jesus did would have been to believe the Father’s words.

For a concept or a vision to be established spiritually, the concept or vision will be twice given; thus, Jesus tells His disciples,

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? **The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does His works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.** Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. (John 14:10–12 emphasis added)

The “works” that endtime disciples will do that are greater than the works Jesus did won’t be in the form of physical healing, but in the form of healing the dead from the finality of death through delivering to them the word [*logos*] of Christ Jesus that He left with His disciples. It is this *logos* that judges unbelievers.

The concept of the Father having delivered “sermons” that consisted of the words Jesus spoke—Jesus having spoken only the Father’s words—plus the works that Jesus did via the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] is a concept I have periodically addressed over the past dozen years ... again, as a human person speaks words through the modulation or manipulation of the person’s breath, the Father spoke “words” that Jesus uttered, with these “words” of the Father representing the utterances of Jesus as well as the works Jesus did. And this is what Christian healers and Christian healing ministries do not understand; for there is no promise of physical healing in Scripture. The passages and texts used to justify healing ministries are misread and usually intentionally distorted.

Again, the greater works than Jesus did that Jesus said His disciples will do pertains to “healing” many from death ... in this present era, no person can be healed from death unless the Father draws the person from the world and delivers that person to Christ

Jesus. But there is an anomaly: if truly born-of-spirit disciples have the authority to forgive sins or to withhold forgiveness, then the act of forgiving transgression of the Law will “heal” a person from death even without the person being born of spirit through the indwelling of Christ Jesus.

The preceding is spiritually solid, but the use of this authority to forgive sins can be extremely problematic considering that the Roman Church usurped this authority and abused it, selling it for the mammon of this world. Thus, endtime sons of God should be hesitant to make decisions about forgiveness or withholding forgiveness, waiting instead for the person to make this decision for him or herself by whether the person will believe the word/*logos* of Jesus that He left with His disciples. If the person under consideration shows by manifested works that he or she believes God, then as James says, the person should call upon the elders and the prayer of faith will forgive sins.

In the juxtaposition between the physical and the spiritual, Christ Jesus “communicates” with those Christians not born of spirit but who profess that Jesus is Lord as the God of Abraham communicated with the children of Israel in the Promised Land:

You [children of Israel] shall therefore keep the whole commandment that I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land that you are going over to possess, and that you may live long in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers to give to them and to their offspring, a land flowing with milk and honey. For the land that you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and irrigated it, like a garden of vegetables. But the land that you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven, a land that the Lord your God cares for. The eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. And **if you will indeed obey my commandments that I command you today, to love the Lord your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil.** And He will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you shall eat and be full. (Deut 11:8–15 emphasis added)

The Lord would “communicate” with the children of Israel in the Promised Land through giving rain in its due season if the children of Israel pleased the Lord, or withholding rain if what the children of Israel did displeased [angered] the Lord ... again in moving from physical to spiritual, “rain in due season” becomes analogous to giving the spirit or withholding the spirit, depending upon what message the Lord wants to “communicate” to greater Christendom. But when the spirit has been collectively withheld so that the Body of Christ is dead as the earthly body of Jesus was dead first on the cross then in the Garden Tomb, how is the Lord to communicate with Christians who have but one breath of life? With the children of Israel, He communicated through sending the nation into captivity. But Christianity is and has been an individual ideology. Conversion is presently individual. No person is humanly born with the spirit

of God; thus, every son of God must be individually called by God until the Second Passover occurs.

Take from ancient Israel one person, a sinner, say the man found gathering sticks on the Sabbath (Num chap 15), and how did the Lord communicate to the person that what he or she did was wrong? Was the person not stoned to death? The person's eventual physical death was prematurely brought upon the person by stones, representing the broken stone tablets of the Law ...

What is death by cancer? Is it not the premature ending of a physical life by an ingrowing anomaly that the human body [the person's immune system] should have killed?

In this present era, human persons—apart from Islamic fundamentalists—will not stone to death another person, nor should they. Within the Christian Church, shunning [delivering a person to Satan for the destruction of the flesh — 1 Cor 5:5] functions as stoning did for ancient Israel. And this leaves the Lord with fewer options when it comes to directly communicating His pleasure or displeasure with a *Christian* to the *Christian*. Taking the person's health from the person is, perhaps, His best choice; for if He were to communicate with the person via a vision, there would be no faith involved. Without faith [belief of God upon which the person has acted], the person cannot please God. Therefore, rather than use a vision to communicate with a Christian not truly born of spirit, it seems that Christ uses the person's health, said with the understanding that the ailments of age are “natural” in the sense that they come upon the person to kill the person regardless of whether the person is without accountable sin.

All of the preceding can be easily dismissed: cancer has environmental or genetic causes, some will say. But why does one person get cancer and another doesn't? Is Christ trying to communicate with every sick person; with every cancer victim? No, He is not. And most every sick person would not call upon the elders of Church to be anointed with oil. Only a believer would call upon the elders. And it is with the Believer that the Lord needs to communicate pleasure or displeasure.

So returning to where we began: a “person” is the human person's inner self that is confined within space-time by the physicality of the fleshly body, confined until the figurative death of Christianity's High Priest through His promotion to being King of kings and Lord of lord. For the Christian's fleshly body serves the Christian's inner self as the Promised Land served the children of Israel; so when the Christian's fleshly body is threatened by premature death, the Christian needs to examine what it is that the Christian does or doesn't do. And this is where what James writes comes into play; for the Christian might well not know that what he or she does angers the Lord. Thus, the Christian should confess sins to one another and pray for one another—and the confession of sins to another person becomes an issue when the one to whom the Christian has confessed cannot keep his or her mouth shut. So presently, it would seem better to confess to Christ Jesus and say no more than necessary to another person who may well not be truly born of spirit.

Christian busybodies comes in both genders.

In this present era, it seems best to give out information on a need to know basis only.

A Christian's fleshly afflictions function spiritually as the giving or withholding of rain in due season functioned for the children of Israel in the Promised Land. Therefore, a Christian healing ministry on its surface seeks to undo what Christ is doing when working with a person ... it is one thing to go to the medical establishment for repair of a broken body, but it is another thing to put faith in a Christian healer when it is the prayer of the elders that forgives sins.

All of this leads to what happens when a person's physical body dies from a premature cause even though sins have been forgiven: why does this person die before his or her time would seem to be up? And we need to look at Isaiah:

The righteous man perishes,
and no one lays it to heart;
devout men are taken away,
while no one understands.
For the righteous man is taken away from calamity;
he enters into peace;
they rest in their beds

who walk in their uprightness. (Isa 57:1–2) [Indented lines are spiritual portions of thought-couplets, with the last four lines forming the spiritual portion of a squared couplet that has the first four lines as the couplet's physical portion.]

The righteous person is taken out of this world through death, a place where the righteous can rest as if in bed because of their righteousness. They await resurrection in peace.

The Christian healed from death through having been born of spirit, thereby passing from death to life without coming under judgment (John 5:24), has no need for the physical house in which this son of God has dwelt for how-ever-many-years. The Christian is as Paul was when Paul wrote,

We know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the spirit as a guarantee. So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what He has done in the body, whether good or evil. (2 Cor 5:1–10)

I need to address one thing before proceeding: Paul writing, *We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ* ... not knowing that a Second Passover liberation of Israel would occur, Paul didn't understand why his fleshly members did the things his mind hated (Rom 7:9–23). Likewise, Paul didn't know what John's Jesus would say

about passing from death to life without coming under judgment (John 5:24). Paul didn't know that there would be two resurrections, that of firstfruits at Christ's return, and a second resurrection a thousand years later, the great White Throne Judgment (Rev 20:11–15). Paul didn't know that Christ wouldn't return in his lifetime (1 Thess 4:15, 17). So while Paul was truly called to do the work he did, he was not given all knowledge. Nor has all knowledge been yet given.

What has been given, though, is the awareness of how free can a person be when he or she is consigned to disobedience? And this awareness is, *not free at all*, with Paul writing,

For just as you [Gentile converts] were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their [Israel's] disobedience, so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. For **God has consigned all to disobedience, that He may have mercy on all.** (Rom 11:30–32 emphasis added)

The Christian convert who, prior to conversion and liberation from indwelling death, conscientiously did what was right and good will still have transgressed the Law in one or more points—and usually will have transgressed the Law with a clear conscience. The Christian who keeps Sunday as the person's Sabbath usually doesn't realize that he or she, in keeping Sunday as the Sabbath, transgresses the Law and is thereby a lawbreaker, a sinner not covered by grace but by death.

Paul wrote, "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law" (Rom 5:12–13).

Where there is no Law, sin is not counted against the person because the inner self of the person is dead, spiritually lifeless, with the person's transgressions of the Law covered by the inner self being consigned to disobedience thereby being a bondservant of the Adversary, with the Adversary covering the transgressions of his serfs as Pharaoh in Egypt "covered" the transgressions of Israel in Egypt by having enslaved Israel ... the Adversary is not and cannot be the sin offering of Israel, especially not after the Passover liberation of Israel. But the Adversary does cover the sins of the disobedient through having dominion over all sons of disobedience; for the son of disobedience is not "free" to keep the Commandments. The son of disobedience is programmed to rebel against God, and for the son of disobedience to be as Moses was, the son of disobedience must rebel against the Adversary as Moses rebelled against Pharaoh when he killed the Egyptian rather than assist the Egyptian beating the Hebrew ... if a son of disobedience continues in disobedience, this son of disobedience is spiritually as a physically enslaved Hebrew was physically.

Again, the person consigned to disobedience is the slave of the Adversary—and this person will have to periodically report to a probation officer, another person tasked with making sure the formerly incarcerated person becomes and continues to be a productive member of society ... how can a person go about overturning the Adversary's reign over humanity? Not by actively resisting authorities that derive their authority to govern from the Adversary. Not by voting one person or one party or one ideology out of power.

The person or persons then voted into power still remain an agent or agents of the Adversary. So the only effective way to rebel against the Adversary is to believe God and begin to voluntarily keep the Commandments.

The person who comes to Sabbath observance kicks a *sabot* into the mechanisms of this world, with this wooden shoe being crushed and splintered by the machinery of commerce.

This concludes the second installed of the Commentary. The third installment awaits publication.

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