

Commentary — From the Margins

“do not harm the oil and wine!”

When Hananiah the false prophet pronounced, in the name of God, that the yoke of Babylon would be broken within two years from off Jerusalem’s neck, the prophet Jeremiah told Hananiah and those assembled together, “The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes to pass, then it will be known that the Lord has truly sent the prophet” (Jer 28:8–9).

Prophets prophesy war, famine, and pestilence; they speak to warn peoples to repent of wrong doing. Good news comes from each person having love for his or her neighbor—with the principle exception that during a future period of worldwide death, when it appears that humanity might not survive, Jesus of Nazareth prophesied that [all who endure to the end shall be saved](#) (Matt 24:13). This is the only good news of that period of tribulation, a period that for the Body of Christ corresponds to the three days and nights that Jesus was in the grave. During this period, the greater Christian Church as the last Eve will give birth to many sons of God. But spiritual birth isn’t directly analogous with human birth. Rather, Jesus’ baptism and receipt of the Breath of God (Matt 3:16); His earthly ministry, physical death, resurrection and glorification—all together establish the pattern for spiritual birth, maturation, metamorphosis [used figuratively], and emergence as glorified beings. The Logos as Theos (John 1:1) created all things physical: the last aspect of this physical creation in which humanity finds itself was establishing the path or model for crossing dimensions. Once the Logos created this path, He sat down at the right hand of the Father to rest.

The above correspondences need emphasized: Jesus’ baptism and receipt of the Breath of God is birth-from-above in the same manner as the first Adam was *born* when he received the breath of life when Elohim [singular in usage] breathed into his nostrils (Gen 2:7). John the Baptist didn’t want to baptize Jesus, for his baptism was for the repentance of sin and Jesus was without sin. But Jesus insisted, saying, “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness” (Matt 3:15). Jesus didn’t need to be baptized, but was baptized to *fulfill all righteousness*. He was establishing or creating the path into the heavenly realm. That path is the fulfillment of all righteousness.

The order of baptism then receipt of the Holy Spirit changed when wild olive branches were grafted onto the root of righteousness: Cornelius and his household received the Holy Spirit, then were baptized. Salvation was no longer limited to a physical nation of natural born Israelites and proselytes. A spiritual nation of Israel was being created by the Father drawing and Christ calling sons of disobedience out of a spiritual Babylon into which all humanity had been consigned when sin and death entered the world through the first Adam. Just as Ezra left Babylon and returned to the Land Beyond the River to rebuild the temple of God, disciples are to leave a spiritual Babylon and mentally relocate themselves in Judea, living as Judeans, for they are today

the temple[s] of God.. Disciples don't know to leave Babylon until after they receive the Holy Spirit. Until then, they are mentally content being part of the world. Their thoughts, their logic is of this world. For them, thoughts of what exists beyond those things that can be measured and seen with the human eye are illogical, even nonsensical. They are no more interested in God than a dog is in quadratic equations. They are spiritually as beasts are physically—and they cannot help themselves, nor change their situation until God gives them the Holy Spirit. Therefore, because the Body of Christ is not of this world, but remains in this world, sons of disobedience must receive a whiff of the Breath of God before they will leave this world and accept spiritual judgment upon themselves, what baptism symbolizes (the death by crucifixion of the Apostle Paul's *old man*). And the fellowships that continue to teach dogma having baptism preceding receipt of the Holy Spirit lack spiritual understanding; these fellowships are in need of being taught sound doctrine. (Their objections to sound doctrine are as so many dogs barking.)

Spiritual birth occurs when the Apostle Paul's new man is born within the tabernacle of the crucified old man—but spiritual birth doesn't produce a glorified butterfly, but rather, a worm that will not die. If the second death in the lake of fire occurs, this death happens upon resurrection when the disciple's judgment is revealed (1 Cor 4:5). And the concept of a second death requires a second birth and life.

But so far, the subject under discussion is an individual's spiritual birth. The texture of Scripture has a last Eve [just as Jesus is the last Adam — 1 Cor 15:45] being created when the glorified Jesus breathed on ten of His disciples and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). The Church is this last Eve—and as a foreshadow of what will happen when this last Eve brings many sons to glory, the 120 were empowered by the Holy Spirit on that day of Pentecost following Jesus' Ascension and acceptance by the Father. As a woman filled by her husband, the Church that day gave birth to three thousand sons. This same last Eve, during the Tribulation (her hard labor pains of spiritual childbirth) will deliver three spiritual sons: Cain, Abel and Seth. These three are the grain harvest of the spiritual land of promise, of Judea. And in a play of shadows, they are all the early barley harvest of firstfruits—and they are both the early barley harvest and the latter wheat harvest. They are not, however, the crushed, pressed and processed fruit of the wild olive branches that were grafted onto the root of righteousness. They are not the fruit of the pruned natural vine.

Textual texture is more easily grasped by oral cultures than by inscribed cultures. Storytellers give verbal clues about the depth (i.e., layering) of a narrative. These clues are not in the text of the narrative but in its presentation. They are revealed in hearing the voice of the person relating the narrative. And the texture of Scripture is revealed in hearing the voice of Christ Jesus.

The four horsemen of the Apocalypse emerge when the seven years of the last Eve's hard [labor pains begin](#). The third of these horsemen rides a black horse and holds a pair of scales [balances] in his hand. The appearance of this horse and rider is how this spiritual entity functions in the plan of God, just as the glorified Jesus appears in the narrative as an actual lamb with seven eyes—He functions as the sacrificed Lamb of God, and His seven spirits function as His eyes. So this horseman doesn't represent famine as has been traditionally taught by Sabbath-keeping fellowships. Rather, this

third horseman makes merchandise, as in the buying and selling of commodities, of both grain harvests of spiritual Judea. This third horseman is the four-headed leopard of Daniel chapter 7, and the spiritual king of the South of Daniel chapter eleven; this third horseman represents sin. And it is sin that makes merchandise of newly born-from-above disciples during the Tribulation. Disciples who have been figuratively processed before the last Eve's hard labor begins are not harmed by sin: they cover their sins through taking the Passover sacraments of Bread and the Cup.

However, even though sin cannot harm, cannot make merchandise of the oil and the wine, these disciples that are the processed fruit of the wild olive grafts and of the pruned vine remain within the correspondence that *fulfills all righteousness*. They collectively disciple those who are born as Cain and Abel. Individually, they join themselves to either Cain or Abel. They cannot not join, for they become the teachers of both spiritual sons of the last Eve that they comprise.

The separation of the greater Church into Cain and Abel has already begun even though the Tribulation hasn't begun—the separation has to begin early so that all of the last Eve's seed are not of Cain. Likewise, a remnant of spiritual Abel (i.e., of disciples who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus — Rev 12:17) will not die, but will function as a spiritual Joshua and a spiritual Caleb to lead Israel across the Jordan and into a spiritual promised land, into God's rest; will function as the realities of the seven pairs of clean animals and single pair of unclean animals that entered the Ark in the days of Noah.

Disciples, today, know whether they are of Cain or of Abel if they examine themselves. Those disciples who will sue a brother, who will persecute a brother, who will defraud a brother are of Cain. They have already marked themselves for the second death. Other human beings don't see this mark, but angels do. And as the mark God placed on Cain kept those who found Cain from attacking him, likewise the mark placed on a spiritual Cain identifies the person as a fugitive under God's protection, a fugitive with whom God will deal, not anyone else. Collectively, God deals with Cain by pouring out the seven bowls of wrath on all those who have taken the mark of the beast. Individually, God deals with a Cain through the Body delivering "the man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord" (1 Cor 5:5). Collectively, the birth of Cain occurs during the Tribulation. Individually, the birth of Cain occurs when a disciple determines that he is not his brother's keeper.

The question emerges, how is a disciple to deal with a marked brother? Concerning the question of idleness, of not supporting oneself through the work of his or her hands, the Apostle Paul writes, "If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother" (2 Thess 3:14–15). The problem now becomes, within the fractured (through denominationalism) Body of Christ, of who marks whom. This problem already existed when the Apostle John wrote his third epistle: Diotrephes, who had made himself first (i.e., was a church leader), slandered John and was putting out of the Body genuine disciples (3 John *vv.* 9–10). Paul had to write an Aristotelian argument to the Galatians because his authority in that fellowship wasn't sufficient to command brethren there to knock off the nonsense about physical circumcision; the authority of whomever had come from Jerusalem was as great or

greater than his. Thus, today, having nothing to do with a brother is ineffectual because of the diversified nature of the Body—the brother merely joins with other like-minded brethren to begin a new work of serving Christ. This brother can still be recognized because he or she will not work, but if again marked, the cycle begins once more. And contrarily, if the brother repents and changes and begins to support him or herself, the damage done by marking cannot be repealed. Who is the universally recognized authority that can restore the brother? So marking is only effective in the spiritual realm, and only effective when done by God. An individual fellowship can remove a brother, but cannot take the Holy Spirit from the person. That remains the prerogative of God alone.

Again, the layering of Scriptural texture: within every individual disciple is the entirety of the plan of God. Within the collective fellowships of disciples that form the Church is the entirety of the plan of God. Within the recorded history of humanity, beginning with the creation of the first Adam, is the entirety of the plan of God. The man Israel in prevailing with God is, ultimately, one holy nation, the tithe of humanity that has been gathered into the storehouse of God.

The model for spiritual birth has, within the splintered churches of God, been that of human birth, with actual birth occurring when disciples are glorified. This model has disciples being begotten rather than born when disciples receive the Holy Spirit. These disciples then grow as fetuses in the womb of the last Eve, the Church. They groan, for they know not how to speak (Rom 8:23), as they await childbirth. And then when born, they emerge as baby gods. They do not emerge as the glorified Christ Jesus is. They do not emerge as the fully developed younger brothers of the glorified Jesus. They do not emerge “conformed to the image of [the Father’s] Son” (v. 29). Thus, while this model has limited merit, it represents a poor understanding of spiritual birth.

The path into the heavenly realm that begins with Jesus *fulfilling all righteousness* corresponds better to the development of butterflies than to the conception, development and birth of human beings, who have most of their physical and mental development ahead of them when born, who enter the world of light utterly helpless and in need of mothering. With butterflies, growth occurs during the pupae stage. This physical growth corresponds to the development of the Apostle Paul’s new man within the tabernacle of the old man, making the tabernacle of flesh the mother of the individual disciple just as the Church is the mother of the collective Body. Salvation of the woman comes through childbirth. Salvation of the disciple’s tabernacle of flesh is also through childbirth. Not that flesh and blood enters the heavenly realm. Rather, the child corresponds to the woman’s salvation, to the Church’s salvation.

With butterflies, when the pupae has grown to maturity, the pupae spins a cocoon around itself and dies, only to emerge as a fully developed butterfly. Within individual disciples, the new creature grows to maturity, then enters a cocoon-like state when its tabernacle of flesh dies—these are souls under the altar (Rev 6:9–11)—only to emerge when resurrected and glorified as a fully grown son of God, a younger brother to Christ Jesus. As there is life within death in the cocoon, so too is there life within death for those who have received spiritual birth. What occurs within this cocoon of timelessness isn’t well understood. Few scriptural passages pertain to the subject other than the spirit returns to God at death. So the metamorphosis of resurrection and glorification remains

as mysterious as what occurred between when Jesus was raised from the dead after three days and three nights, and when He ascended to the Father (there is an unaccounted-for half day). Three and a half days pass between when Jesus was crucified/sacrificed and when He was glorified. Three and a half years will pass between when the last Eve gives birth to Cain and Abel, and when she gives birth to Seth through the Holy Spirit being poured out upon all flesh. These three and a half years cover the ministry of the two witnesses, whose deaths and resurrections testify to the defeat of Death, the fourth horseman of the Apocalypse. By two or three witnesses *a thing* is established. The man Jesus of Nazareth is the first witness that Death has been defeated. But *a thing* isn't established by one witness. Disciples accept the fact that Death has been defeated by faith. However, when the two witnesses are resurrected that faith becomes the evidence of *a thing* seen. (The fourth beast of Daniel chapter seven is the spiritual king of the North and functions in the plan of God as Death, the fourth horseman. He is taken when the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ — compare Dan 7:9–14 with Rev 11:15–19. His body is given over to be burned. It is the tattoo of him [i.e., his body] that becomes the mark of the beast.)

Therefore, the first three and a half years of the Tribulation corresponds to the time Jesus spent in the grave and awaiting Ascension. Individually, these years and days equate to the time an individual disciple spends in the grave awaiting his or her change. And the texture of Scripture allows more to be surmised about both periods. Cain kills Abel. That righteous son of God through Adam didn't die accidentally, but was murdered. Disciples born to the last Eve during that time who practice righteousness can expect to be killed. But if they are unwilling to lose their lives for Christ, they are not worthy of Him (Matt 10:39). Likewise, those disciples who try to save their lives will lose them spiritually (2 Thess 2:all). So Cain dies spiritually while Abel dies physically. Thus, for individual disciples, the person who tries to save his or her physical life is as the first lawbreaker to speak at Calvary. The person who willingly crucified his or her former self will *fulfill all righteousness* and will gain salvation even though the flesh dies, or is dead.

Both of the last Eve's sons, spiritually born-from-above at the beginning of the Tribulation, die. One physically. One spiritually. But this last Eve's salvation is in childbirth—and she bears a third son that corresponds to Christ's Ascension and glorification. Therefore, the good news that must be proclaimed to all the world as a witness to all nations before the end comes is that [all who endure to the end shall be saved](#) (Matt 24:13–14 & 10:22). (We now see in the tenth chapter of Matthew what the oil and the wine will do during the first three and a half years of the Tribulation. They are as Jesus' disciples were during His earthly ministry.) All who endure to the end are as Jesus was: they will be accepted by God; they will be saved. Their maturation process will occur during the last three and a half years of seven years of tribulation—this is the period through which they must endure in faith. Then they will be changed in the twinkling of an eye. They will be glorified. They will go directly from pupae to butterfly without spending time in a cocoon stage.

Disciples today are being processed and refined, with the pressing of oil from olives and crushing grapes for wine being the correspondences. Impurities are being strained away. Even wild olives yield oil although not as much as a chosen variety. Even wild

grapes produce wine although that wine will be foxy. Therefore, the disciple who resists refining will be rejected with the pulp, and will be cast away. Disciples must endure the refining process; thus, they must endure to the end. And the collective has again been revealed through the individual, and vice versa, such is the texture of Scripture.

All of the above pertains to the harvest of firstfruits, or the early barley harvest of spiritual Judea. But the above also pertains to the great White Throne Judgment, when the wheat harvest, which corresponds to that portion of the early harvest represented by the birth of the spiritual Seth, emerges from death without previously receiving spiritual life through the Holy Spirit. This latter wheat harvest will be accepted as the second thief at Calvary was—or rejected as the first thief was. And this model of spiritual birth begins with Jesus' baptism representing the literal death of the old man. This model has no extended period of ministry beyond what the second thief said to the first, but quickly proceeds to a figurative rejection of physical life and glorification (this rejection of physical corresponding to the time Jesus spent in the grave). Or a resurrected individual will lay claim to his or her physical life and reject spiritual life; hence, the individual will experience the second death.

Everyone in the great White Throne Judgment—contrary to what many Evangelical teachers of Israel claim—will be accepted by God, will be saved if the person will reject his or her physical life. And this great White Throne Judgment is represented by the last or eighth day of Tabernacles, when humanity will no longer dwell in fleshly tents but will be like the angels, only higher in order, for they will be the sons of the Most High, the younger brethren of the firstborn Son of God. They are the great wheat harvest of spiritual Judea.

Because sin cannot harm the oil and the wine doesn't mean that these disciples will be physically protected in a place of safety. Nor does it mean that these disciples will be bodily raptured to heaven. It means that collectively, these disciples have overcome sin through the blood of the Lamb.

* * * * *