

## Commentary — From the Margins

### *The Spiritual Sons of God*

The Son of Man will be revealed with the suddenness of the flood of Noah's day (Luke 17:26–30). People will be going about their business, doing those things that constitute their everyday routines until a specific day and hour when, as the first labor contraction seizes a pregnant woman, the mundane affairs of humanity suddenly cease. Evangelical Christianity has captured the suddenness of this revealing of the Son of Man in its Rapture theology. But this sect of the greater Christian Church has entirely missed the nature of the revealing, which will be the Church's [liberation](#) from bondage to sin just as the ancient circumcised nation of Israel was liberated from physical bondage in Egypt. And as a woman going into labor is not interested in politics or social teas or whether laundry needs to be done, the Church, stunned and in great pain, will momentarily cease its denominational quarreling as it is empowered by the Holy Spirit.

But this suspension of quarreling doesn't last: as with a pregnant woman when that first labor contraction passes, the Church will return to its north/south (Arian/Trinitarian) schism as two spiritual forces emerge unfettered and make war against the other. These two theological divisions of the greater Christian Church will constitute a spiritual reality that was foreshadowed by the Greek Selucid and Ptolemaic kingdoms' reign over Jerusalem—a reality of the prophet Daniel's long vision (recorded in Dan chptr 11).

The simplicity of prophecy is perceived through [typology](#), through realizing that the geography of Judea functions as the visible correspondent of God's rest (Ps 95:10–11 & Heb 3:19); i.e., of heaven and of the invisible mental topography of the household of God. Crops grew on Judean hillsides when they received the earlier and the latter rains, analogous to disciples receiving the Holy Spirit. These hills produced two grain-harvests, the early barley harvest and the later wheat harvest, with each crop dependent upon its respective early or later rain. These two grain-harvests correspond to two harvests of disciples, an earlier and a later. Beginning with the Wave Sheaf offering at Passover, the Judean barley harvest corresponds to the harvest of firstfruits, the first of which was Christ Jesus Himself when He was accepted by the Father (John 20:17, 21) as the reality of the Wave Sheaf. The remainder of the first Judean harvest was gathered into barns by the Feast of Weeks (i.e., Pentecost). And the counting of these seven weeks from the morrow after the Wave Sheaf offering represents the counting of the seven years of the Tribulation, which is also represented by the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (during Unleavened Bread, leavening represents sin, so living without leavened bread becomes analogous to living without sin).

There is no contradiction of metaphors or imagery with the seven days of Unleavened Bread representing the same period that the seven weeks between the Wave Sheaf and the Feast of Weeks represent. The entirety of the plan of God is represented by the annual High Days that commemorate the harvest seasons of

the Judean hill country—glorified human beings are either part of the early barley harvest or the later wheat harvest. This plan, though, is additionally represented and repeated by the spring High Day calendar, and by the fall High Day calendar. The emphasis of the spring calendar is the barley harvest. The fall calendar repeats this plan of God, with emphasis on the later wheat harvest. And again, the entirety of the calendar repeats this plan, thereby revealing that the double harvests are really aspects of a single harvest of the earth. Thus, the second High Day of Passover week (i.e., the last day of Unleavened Bread) commemorates [on the shortened spring calendar] the resurrection and acceptance by the Father of the firstfruits when Jesus returns to begin His millennial reign. Disciples, forming the Body of the Son of Man, will also be revealed when the Son of Man is revealed. The Body, now clothed in the righteousness of Christ, will when revealed cover itself with its own obedience to God as it lives seven years without sin, the seven years of the Tribulation.

When Elohim placed Adam in Eden, the geographical area represented by this garden of God stretched from the Tigris River to approximately the Nile (Gen 2:10–14). When Joshua with the children of Israel crossed the Jordan River, the promised land of God stretched from the Jordan to Lebanon. David pushed Israel's geographical boundaries to their largest limit in a manner analogous to him pushing circumcised Israel's spiritual boundaries to their utmost limits, thereby through faith establishing his glorified reign over the spiritual kingdom of Israel (Ezek 37:24–28).

The largeness or smallness of the geographical territory governed by the kings of Israel reflected this holy nation's spiritual health, which was usually poor at best. Following the reign of King Solomon, the single kingdom of Israel divided into a northern [Israel] and a southern [Judah] house. Although the division occurred because Solomon's son Rehoboam desired to raise taxes even higher than had his father, the division was of God because of Solomon's sins, the greatest of which was his many wives and their gods. These foreign wives of Solomon came to represent Israel going after foreign gods, a practice this holy nation never stopped. So first the northern kingdom of Samaria (i.e., the House of Israel) went into captivity because it would not walk uprightly before God, thereby shrinking the holy nation of Israel to the geographical size of the southern kingdom. Then the southern kingdom was taken captive, leaving only the *polis* of Jerusalem to geographically represent the spirituality of the nation. Finally, even Jerusalem was sacked and burned. Then after seventy years, Cyrus, king of Persia, ordered that a house for God be built in Jerusalem—the geographical promised land was now the size of the temple mount, and was under the rule of Babylon. Thus, when Jesus physically entered the temple, He entered all that remained of the promised land. Today, disciples are the temple of God. Hence, the mental topography of disciples constitutes the garden of God, the entirety of the land between the Tigris and the Nile. And in this physical landscape dwelt the circumcised sons of Abraham when they were not in Egyptian bondage. Esau dwelt in Seir. Ishmael dwelt on the Sinai Peninsula, which holds the Wilderness of Sin.

The geographical boundaries of Eden are analogous to the spiritual boundaries in which born-from-above sons of God live. But the promised land was not all of this geographical landscape when God made Israel his holy nation (Exod 19:5–6). And not all who have descended from Israel belong to Israel (Rom 9:6). Not all who have descended from spiritual Israel belong to this spiritually holy nation. Not all of Abraham’s spiritual sons are chosen—many are called but few are chosen (Matt 22:14).

A mistake some prophecy pundits have made is to assume that prophecies concerning the endtime house of Israel pertain to the geographical lands that the descendants of the house of Israel occupy when the Son of Man is revealed. These prophecies are only tangentially about geographical lands; they primarily pertain to the philosophical or theological or spiritual mental topography of one division of the Church, now the holy nation of God (1 Pet 2:9). The holy nation of Israel went from being a physical nation to being a spiritual nation when the division of humanity through circumcision was abolished (Eph 2:15). Division is today through possession of the Holy Spirit, or birth from above. The kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of the Most High and His Christ (Rev 11:15) when the Holy Spirit is poured out upon all flesh (Joel 2:28) in the manner foreshadowed by what happened on that day of Pentecost following Calvary. So until Satan is cast from heaven halfway through seven years of tribulation (Rev 12:9–10 & Dan 7:9–14) and can no longer reign as the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2), the present division of humanity between those who have been born-again and those who still await spiritual birth will remain.

When the Logos was born as Jesus of Nazareth, humanity was divided between the circumcised sons of promise [i.e., sons of Isaac], the circumcised sons of slavery [i.e., sons of Ishmael], and the uncircumcised world. The circumcised sons of promise were further divided between those God hated [i.e., the descendants of Esau] and those God loved [i.e., the descendants of Israel] (Rom 9:6–13). Likewise, humanity is today divided between spiritual sons of promise, spiritual sons of slavery, and those who are spiritually uncircumcised. Further, the spiritual sons of promise are today—when no sin is yet imputed to them—divided between those God hates (because they do not love righteousness enough to practice walking uprightly before Him under the cloak of grace) and those God loves.

The above needs to be well understood: not everyone who has been spiritually circumcised is a spiritual son of promise. Many spiritually circumcised sons of God have not left the world, have not mentally relocated themselves to Judea in the manner that Abraham, the father of the faithful, did when told to move (Heb 11:8). These many born-again sons of God are today the spiritually circumcised sons of slavery: they form a great nation as the circumcised sons of Ishmael formed a great nation (Gen 21:8–21), but they are not the holy nation of promise even though they are of Abraham’s spiritual seed. They do not live as spiritual Judeans, but as spiritual Gentiles. They do not keep the laws of God, but brag of not being under the law. Their desire is to serve God, but they remain the children of bondage for they continue to serve sin; they continue in their

lawlessness as if they were never mentally liberated from bondage to sin or lawlessness (1 John 3:4). Sin is lawlessness. If a person continues in the lawlessness to which the person was consigned (Rom 11:32) after God has mercy upon this person—i.e., after before being born from above, and having his or her sins forgiven—the person becomes a spiritual son of disobedience, a spiritual son of slavery. Thus, the greater Christian Church, composed of all who have the Spirit of God, consists of all spiritual sons of Abraham, including the spiritual sons of Ishmael and the sons of Esau. But the spiritual sons of promise are only those who mentally dwell in Judea. And spiritual Judeans live physically by the laws of God that have been written on their hearts and placed in their minds.

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the saints of Galatia, he used Hagar and Sarah as a metaphor of the physically circumcised versus the spiritually circumcised children of Abraham. He made the then-present Jerusalem correspond to the physical nation of Israel, with the Jerusalem above corresponding with the nation of promise born from above through the Holy Spirit. Thus, the holy nation of God consigned to death under the law (for the nation's transgressions of the law — Ezek 20:23–24 & John 7:19) corresponded to the children of Ishmael, who themselves had become twelve princes with geographical kingdoms. The spiritually holy nation of God, composed of those who were not before a nation, corresponded to the invisible Jerusalem above. This nation has no geographical confines or borders. Its boundaries are spiritual. And its inhabitants are identified by spiritual circumcision, or circumcised hearts and minds [or souls, from Deu 30:6].

The metaphor of Hagar and Sarah, however, because of its spiritual nature has a second application: everyone born of Spirit is a son of Abraham. Again, the greater Christian Church includes everyone who has been born of Spirit. So those who have been born of Spirit are both the sons of the bond woman, the Egyptian handmaid Hagar, and the sons of the free woman Sarah—and this occurs without injustice on God's part (Rom 9:14). Under the second covenant made with the uncircumcised children of Israel before these children crossed the Jordan (Deu 29:1) to enter God's rest (Ps 95:10–11 & Heb 3:19), God placed before each the choice of life and death (Deu 30:15). If while in captivity in distant lands the children of the Israelites that left Egyptian slavery returned to God and began to keep His laws and commandments, God would bring them back to the promised land and would give them circumcised hearts and minds. But none of these children had to experience the curses that caused captivity. All of them could have then kept the laws of God, for the law was neither far from them, nor too hard to keep (*v.* 11). Likewise, drawn and called spiritual sons of God, born-from-above, can keep the laws and commandments of God. They have that choice set before them just as the children of those Israelites that left Egypt had the choice then before them on the plains of Moab. The free will that all spiritually born sons of God have is their decision of whether they will mentally relocate themselves to Judea to begin living as spiritual Judeans, or whether they will remain living as spiritual bondservants in the world, even though they are no longer of the world.

Just because a person has been born of the Jerusalem above (just as an Israelite physically born into the circumcised nation in Egypt) doesn't mean that the person automatically enters God's rest, represented typologically by the promised land of Judea. Again, not all of Israel was Israel. Likewise, not all of spiritual Israel is spiritual Israel. Remember, except for Joshua and Caleb, the circumcised nation that left Egypt did not enter the promised land because of its unbelief. The spiritually circumcised nation, except for that portion represented by Joshua and Caleb, will not enter God's rest because of unbelief—because this nation doesn't believe the truth but has pleasure in unrighteousness. And having pleasure in unrighteousness manifests itself as a continuation of living in bondage to lawlessness when the person has been mentally set free from sin. This is the great nation spiritually derived from Hagar, the Egyptian handmaid.

Disciples are no longer under the law, with its ordinances of death. Rather, disciples have become the tablets upon which the laws of God have been inscribed. And if a person will not attempt to walk uprightly, striving to keep the laws of God, the person will never enter God's rest. The person who practices disobedience makes himself or herself the servant of another spiritual kingdom through choosing death instead of life. The person who by faith keeps the law will live because of the law. This person doesn't seek his or her own righteousness, but strives to live as Jesus did. Righteousness is not a matter of works, of what one's hands do, but of what one thinks. Righteousness is a mindset that will have the person obeying God through keeping His laws even when no one is looking. Righteousness is determining to keep the least of the commandments, then striving to do so for the remainder of the person's natural life. And the least of the commandments is the Sabbath commandment: if a disciple will not keep the Sabbath when no one is looking, then the person is not faithful in the small things of God. The person either like Esau doesn't value his or her inheritance enough not to trade it to satisfy physical appetites, or the person, as Ishmael was physically, remains a bondservant of sin/Egypt. In both cases, this spiritual son of Abraham will not enter God's rest, for the promise is to Isaac, then to Israel, who wrestled with God—and prevailed.

A person is made a spiritual son of God because God will have mercy upon whom He will (Rom 9:15). God doesn't first consult with the person before He draws the person from the world (John 6:44, 65). Rather, the Father draws and Christ calls and the person is born from above without the person having any say in the matter, just as a human infant is born of the water of the womb without the infant's consent. The infant's parents decide (or take the action necessary) for a human infant to be born. So it is with God. A holy son of Abraham is born of Spirit without the affected human being having any say in the matter. Only after birth can this spiritual infant influence his or her destiny.

Free will exists for all spiritual sons of God. Although Ishmael could not help being the son of Hagar, a born-from-above disciple can choose to live as a spiritual Judean, what Paul said that the Apostle Peter taught Greek converts to do (Gal 2:14). Although Esau was rejected when still in the womb (i.e., before he sinned), a born-again disciple chooses rejection by God through not valuing his

or her birthright when physically hungry and thirsty, destitute and persecuted. If a disciple is not willing to lose his or her physical life for Christ, the person is not worthy of Christ. If a person is not willing to keep the commandments when the person knows that he or she should, the person chooses rejection. Free will has been exercised. Unrighteousness (as in the case of Ishmael) or the person's physical life (as in the case of Esau) were more important to the person than was obedience by faith to God. And too many disciples choose spiritual death when still infants. They listened to and believed so-called men [and women] of God who were/are teachers of iniquity or lawlessness (Matt 7:21–23). They didn't listen to Jesus; they didn't hear or know His voice; and they certainly don't now believe the One who sent Him. Therefore, they will go into the lake of fire when their judgments are revealed at Christ's return.

Caleb was not born as an Israelite. He became one by choice. He left Egypt by choice. And by faith, he counseled Israel to immediately enter the promised land of Judea when he, along with the eleven others, returned from spying out God's rest.

God said that Caleb had in him a different spirit than did the other Israelites (Num 14:24). Because of his faith, he entered God's rest, for he was willing to follow God fully. And every son of God who is today living as a spiritual Ishmaelite, or as a spiritual son of Esau can, as Caleb did, join himself or herself to spiritual Israel by following God fully. This means keeping the commandments of God, even the least of them.

The spring calendar begins with [Passover](#): Jesus as the Lamb of God is the reality of the paschal lamb sacrificed for the firstborn of Israel. The calendar next celebrates Israel's liberation from bondage to Pharaoh (the first High Day of Unleavened Bread). The reality will be the holy nation's [liberation](#) from the law of sin and death that dwells in its members (Rom 7:25) at the beginning of the Tribulation, these seven years being the hard labor birth pains of the last Eve bringing sons of God to glory. These seven years will be spent living without sin (the seven days of Unleavened Bread). Then counting as the Sadducees did, the Wave Sheaf offering is made on the Sunday following the weekly Sabbath within Unleavened Bread. This is, within Christianity, Resurrection Sunday, when Jesus was accepted as the reality of the first sheaf of barley harvested in Judea. Then at the conclusion of the seven days of Unleavened Bread is the High Day that commemorates entering into God's rest, when the Messiah comes and the firstfruits are glorified. Now, concluding the spring calendar and after a long wait will come the Feast of Weeks when the last of the harvest is gathered into barns. This is a shadow of the great White Throne Judgment, when the Holy Spirit is given to all physically resurrected human beings who have not previously been born-from-above. This is not a second chance for salvation, but the first chance for individuals who were not previously drawn by the Father and chosen by Christ Jesus (John 15:16, 19). Each person will only be born-from-above once, just as each person is only born of woman once. There are no second chances to receive salvation. Judgment is today upon the household of God (1 Pet 4:17), upon all who have been born-from-above, but not upon the remainder of

humanity. Their judgment will occur after their physical deaths (Heb 9:27 — baptism equates to physical death) and resurrections. They will be like the two thieves crucified with Jesus.

Judgment is today upon all spiritual children of Abraham, upon all who are cloaked in the righteousness of Christ Jesus. These spiritual children of the patriarch will mentally leave the world and begin to live as Judeans, or they will mentally migrate to some other land that is not God's rest, or they will mentally remain where they were when drawn and called. The choice is theirs, and theirs alone.

Every individual who has been born of Spirit is called a child of Abraham for a reason: every one has been spiritually circumcised through the law of God being written on his or her heart and mind. But the promise isn't to all of Abraham's seed. It is made to those who will by faith enter God's rest, who do not believe that the giant of obedience to the laws of God is too large to defeat. The promise is to those disciples who become Judeans when still geographically living in distant lands.

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