

[The following is Section 6 of the “Introduction to Volume Five” of *APA*]

6.

The evidence produced by closely reading Matthew’s Gospel is that this text cannot be read literally: it is not literally true. It is figuratively true, however. But what does this mean for Christianity, and for Sabbatarian Christianity that uses Matthew’s Gospel as a primary source text? For modern Sabbatarian Christianity as a whole is not significantly different from 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Century CE Ebionite Christianity that used a gospel similar to Matthew’s Gospel minus the first two chapters of Matthew’s Gospel? (Ebionite Christians were Sabbath keepers that apparently held pre-Arian Christology.)

If Matthew’s Gospel cannot be read literally, taking its words at their face value [denotative meanings], then can any of the Gospels be read literally? Can any text lacking historicity be read literally? Certainly the Book of Acts as a Sophist novel cannot be read literally. And portions of Paul’s epistles were to correct literal readings of Scripture by Greek converts, especially his epistle to the Galatians who had begun to outwardly circumcise themselves.

By canonizing certain 1<sup>st</sup>-Century texts in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Centuries, the early Catholic Church effectively stifled textual debate, limiting the New Testament canon to the texts that proto-Catholic congregations were using in their services. The modern form of this is being undertaken by Islam which cannot accept any criticism of the prophet Mohammad. But by inscribing and then canonizing the oral memories of Mohammad as he relayed his visions to others, the authors of the Qur’an created a text that misrepresents the God of Abraham, the Creator of all things made ... the Qur’an is not true, for in it *Allah* is a single deity, the God of the living, and human persons are born with immoral souls; i.e., with indwelling eternal life. Thus, if the authors of the Qur’an correctly inscribed Mohammad’s visions, Mohammad was a false prophet who gave credence to the lie of the Adversary—the serpent telling Eve, “You will not surely die” (Gen 3:4)—that would have human persons born with indwelling eternal life, or life apart from the dark fire of cellular oxidation that is the glory of man, this glory sustained by the person’s breath.

*Allah* as the God of Abraham created all things physical, including the “physical” abutment upon the which the bridge across dimensions rests. But this “bridge” was constructed by God the Father, the Most High God (and the deity concealed from Israel by the creation), giving to the man Jesus a second breath of life, His breath [*pneuma Theou*], that gave to the man Jesus indwelling eternal life: “For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself” (John 5:26).

All human persons are descended from Eve who did not eat from the Tree of Life before she was driven from the Garden of God. No human person is born with “life” in him or herself (Matt 8:22). All are born spiritually dead; i.e., without indwelling heavenly life. All are born without the ability to receive the *bright fire* that is the glory of God (Ezek 1:26–28); for the *bright fire* that is the glory of God would consume any person descended from Adam to whom the Lord God said, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die” (Gen 2:16–17). Thus, Christian or Muslim, without the indwelling of Christ Jesus, the vessel to whom the Father granted the right to have *life in Himself*, the person has no indwelling eternal life for the bright fire of the glory of God would consume the person (see Ex 33:5, 18–23).

Every person who believes that he or she is born with an immortal soul believes a lie, the principle lie of the Adversary. Every *jihadist* who straps on a suicide belt or vest believes this lie ... the principle way around believing that the Most High God raises the dead (again, the Most High God being the deity ancient Israel never knew; the deity Jesus came to reveal to His disciples whom the Father, this Most High God, had given to Him) is to believe that the Creator of all things physical gave to physical men indwelling eternal life, a belief that when deconstructed makes no sense at all.

The Creator of all things physical gave to Adam physical life, the life realized by the conscious mind; the life realized by self-awareness, by a perception of “self” that really doesn’t age much once the person reaches physical maturity. Thus, human persons die physically while still mentally young. They do not get to physically “complete life.” Certainly an old person intellectually knows he or she is old, but the old person doesn’t intuitively think of him or herself being old as death overtakes the person. Therefore, the person’s logic will have the “person” being represented by an ageless internal entity, an immortal soul, without the person’s logic realizing that the agelessness of the person’s self-awareness closely matched physical maturity until sometime post puberty. Then, when the person had become a physical adult, the age of the person’s self-awareness became static.

Is “aging” maturing beyond physical maturity, or does aging come about by the person’s body slowly killing the physically mature person? Is not aging the fulfillment of what the Lord God told Adam when He placed the man in the Garden of Eden? Does not a human person die in the mental “day” when the person realizes mature self-awareness, with <day> not being a literal period of twenty-four hours but the “light of life”?

Adam ate forbidden fruit, and in the cool of the evening of the day when he ate, the Lord God sent the man out of the garden before he could “reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever” (Gen 3:22) ... Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden to till the ground from which Adam was taken: the Lord God cursed the man, saying, “By the sweat of your face / you shall eat bread, / till you return to the ground, / for out of it you were taken; / for you are dust, / and to dust you shall return” (v. 19). However, when coupling how Adam was cursed to how the serpent was cursed a reality emerges that reveals a long standing relationship:

Because you have done this,  
Cursed are you above all livestock  
And above all beasts of the field;  
On your belly you shall go,  
And *dust you shall eat*  
All the days of your life. (Gen 3:14 emphasis added)

Adam was taken from the dust of this earth, and Adam will return to being dust, what the serpent shall devour as his food for all the days of his life.

Physical serpents have pelvic and shoulder girdles as if they could have arms and legs. Fossils of snakes with legs have been found, but the distinction between a snake and lizard is the absence or presence of legs: if even tiny, useless legs are present as is the case with some Australian snakelike-lizards, the creature is a lizard.

Now, do physical snakes eat dust? No, they do not. Just ask my wife, who was enjoying her kitchen garden when a racer entered it, slithered through the basil and around the fig tree and swallowed her favorite toad, then retreated under the house with the toad as a lump a

third of the way along its length. She was angry, told me to kill the snake if I had a chance. There was certainly “enmity between [the serpent] and the woman” (Gen 3:15).

If serpents do not eat dust, and if men physically return to the base elements of the earth when they die—and because women do experience pain when they bring forth children, and pain when these children die prematurely—how should the cursing of the serpent, the cursing of the woman, and the cursing of the man be read? The text itself discloses a physicality that reflects a spiritual reality; or as the Apostle Paul said (paraphrased), *The invisible things of God are revealed by the visible things that have been made* (Rom 1:20) ... the serpent that ate the toad that lived in the patch of kale to the side of the fig tree doesn't eat dust, but eats living creatures. Likewise, that old serpent Satan the devil doesn't eat living human beings that are dust, but keeps living human beings from eating of the tree of life and thereby living spiritually. But note that clause, *all the days of his life*: the old serpent Satan the devil will not live forever, but will be cast into the creation where he will perish (*cf.* Rev 12:7–10; Ezek 28:18–19).

That old serpent Satan the devil will, when he is cast into space-time, come as a roaring lion seeking to devour whomever he can. Again, he doesn't physically eat people: human persons are not a prey species for a physical predator.

When Noah exited the Ark, God told him, “The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered” (Gen 9:2). This is even true of brown bears that will avoid a person if they can. And when there is a bear/person encounter that is unrelated to food, it is usually young bears that cause the encounter; for they, like teenage hooligans, are still attempting to determine their place in this world, and will challenge a person as if the person were another young bear, with the challenge often proving fatal to the bear.

If in Genesis 3:14, the serpent eats dust which isn't true, whereas the man is dust (which is true), then the serpent eats men in a figurative or metaphorical sense, with the serpent being the representation of Satan the devil, whose food isn't men but whose goal seems to be using men [humankind] to prove to all that his ways of democratic self-government give greater benefits to all, rebelling angels and faithful angels. An unequal demonstration project has been established, with human persons being the subject of the demonstration as well as one of two judges of the demonstration (angels are the other). For six days, the Adversary will use human persons to prove that his ways of democracy and liberty exceed in all aspects of life the way of the Most High God, who has handicapped His one day of demonstration by preventing his subjects from buying and selling or engaging in transactions in any way. Thus, for six days, human persons starting from nothing will build systems of self-governance that will fail at a specific point on the “x” axis event-timeline, and fail without outside intervention. This is seen in the United States of America with its national debt of over 16 trillion dollars and its unfunded contracted obligations of another 70+ trillion dollars, giving to America a debt-to-asset ration that would require a bank to foreclose on a person with a similar debt-to-asset ratio ... America is bankrupt, but refuses to make spending cuts. The political will isn't present to make cuts. Thus, America as the most successful democratic republic the world has ever known is teetering on the brink of fiscal collapse, with no lifeline that can be thrown to bail the nation out. There will be no white knight riding to America's rescue. Rather, the world will cheer when America collapses

because the nation—like any other addict—couldn't quit spending money when it had no way to repay what it had already spent.

In every democracy, there is a disconnect between reality and perception, with this disconnect voicing itself in the people voting for politicians that promise unfunded prosperity as if a person could borrow his or her way to being wealthy. The argument is that right investment—say, investments in education, in green energy, in the environment—made with borrowed money will bring about full employment of a population that looks too much like it has fallen down a flight of stairs while holding a tackle box of fishing lures (Dave Ramsey's expression) ... seriously, has not the person with multiple facial piercings in lips, nose, cheeks, eyebrows made him or herself unemployable? This person would be an employment liability for such piercings are distractions, both to the person and to fellow employees. And while the person has, in a democracy, the right to whatever body adornment the person chooses—a right conferred by citizenship in the democracy—an employer in the same democracy has the right to not hire anyone, or even relocate his or her manufacturing plant to a nation that isn't rich enough for its populace to practice self-mutilation or self adornment via facial studs and rings.

There is a historical tendency for men to wear earrings shortly before the culture collapses, with the collapsed culture being replaced by a more austere, minimalist culture, one that spurns male head and face piercings ....

The Lord said to Moses, "Depart; go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your offspring I will give it.' I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people." When the people heard this disastrous word, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments. For the Lord had said to Moses, "Say to the people of Israel, 'You are a stiff-necked people; if for a single moment I should go up among you, I would consume you. So *now take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do with you.*'" Therefore the people of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments, from Mount Horeb onward. (Ex 33:1–6)

A correspondence existed between personal adornment and being far from God, with the removal of personal adornment being a form of humbling oneself before God; of coming before God without haughtiness.

What would the Lord have done with ancient Israel if the nation hadn't taken off its personal ornaments? Would there even be an ancient Israel, or would there have been only a nation derived from Moses?

The serpent is to eat dust all of his days while man is to return to dust—that old serpent Satan the devil devours what is accursed, with the man cursed being him who knows good and evil, the mingling of the sacred with the profane as in Christmas where Christ Jesus [the sacred] is mingled with the birthday of the sun [the profane]. The person who observes Christmas is as a "Christian" as Adam was as a man driven from the Garden of God; the person is far from God and cannot return to God until the Second Passover liberation of Israel.

I received a rambling e-message yesterday from a fellow who had just separated himself from a pastor and a fellowship in Southern Illinois. Some of the fellow's complaints were about operational decisions made by the pastor, a person I know, but some of his

complaints were about the pastor not reading the opening verses of Genesis chapter six literally as these verses were read in the Book of Enoch. To the fellow, sons of God “literally” meant angels. The pastor had tried to convince him otherwise and a schism developed between the two men.

In Genesis 6:2, we find that “the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive” ... first, there are here translation problems that go back to at least the 6<sup>th</sup>-Century BCE; for whomever wrote Genesis—let us assume Moses did, but this assumption is based upon faith, not evidence—used a language that was not fully alphabetized and inscribed in characters that changed with the passage of time. The word that comes to endtime disciples as <God> was inscribed as the plural noun we write as *Elohim*, the plural of *Eloah*, which is a Semitic compound word for *God* <El> plus vocalized aspiration <ab> of the sort added to Abram’s name when his name was written in the divine Book of Remembrance (Book of Life). Linguistically, *Elohim* deconstructs to <El + ab> + <El + ab> an undetermined number of times. So for the person insisting that the linguistic identifying phrase <sons of God> be read literally to mean “angels” the person needs to read the Psalms:

God has taken his place in the divine council; / in the midst of the gods he holds judgment: / "How long will you judge unjustly / and show partiality to the wicked? / Selah / Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; / maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. / Rescue the weak and the needy; / deliver them from the hand of the wicked." / They have neither knowledge nor understanding, / they walk about in darkness; / all the foundations of the earth are shaken. / I said, "*You are gods, / sons of the Most High, all of you; / nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince.*" / Arise, O God, judge the earth; / for you shall inherit all the nations! (Ps 82:1–8 emphasis added)

The sons of the Most High God, who are gods and who then unjustly judged the earth will die like men ...

Are they men as Jesus contended when He asked Jews about to stone Him, “If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—do you say of Him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, “You are blaspheming,” because I said, “I am the Son of God”” (John 10:34–36)?

Did Jesus read the Psalmist literally, or did He mentally make the connection that since it was to men that the inscribed word of God came, it was, therefore, to men whom God spoke when He called them *gods* and *sons of God*?

The basic implication in Jesus’ question needs addressed: is there written (inscribed) narrative in heaven? If there is, in what language is this inscription, and upon what surface is the inscription made? For a “surface” assumes substance, mass, and “inscription” assumes a past that is remembered, a past that reflects the heteroglossia of the moment when the inscription was made. And the Apostle Paul addresses heavenly inscription:

Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you, or from you? *You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our [your] hearts, to be known and read by all. And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.* (2 Cor 3:1–3 emphasis added)

The life lived by a disciple is an epistle in the heavenly Book of Life. Inscription in this heavenly book is not by ink on a physical surface, but by receipt of indwelling eternal life so that the heart of the person has written on it the commandments of God. Physical

inscription, like physical serpents, reveal through being “visible” the invisible nature of the inscription of the laws of God on the heart of a disciple, or the invisibility of that old serpent, Satan the devil.

Endtime disciples need to realize that being filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God doesn't mean that the person has been born of spirit; i.e., has received the indwelling of the bright fire of heavenly life. As a word, <spirit> means <breath> but breath in a metonymical sense, “breath” as in representing all that a human person is ... the breath of man is the glory of man, a point made in a previous section; for the breath of man fuels the dark fire of cellular oxidation that sustains the life of a human person.

The Preacher wrote, according to translators,

I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are but beasts. For *what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath*, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. All go to one place. *All are from the dust, and to dust all return. Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down into the earth?* So I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his work, for that is his lot. Who can bring him to see what will be after him? (Eccl 3:18–22 emphasis added)

All have the same breath; all have the same spirit. Too many have believed the lie of the Adversary that the spirit of man is different from the spirit of a beast, with this difference permitting a young *jihadist* to turn him or herself into a bomb-delivery-system.

The inverse side of the spirit/breath of man being the same as the spirit/breath of a beast is the point the Preacher makes: human persons are humanly born as beasts. Adam never ate of the Tree of Life. Adam's glory was his physical life, which didn't end on the day when he ate forbidden fruit: “Thus all the days that Adam lived were 930 years, and he died” (Gen 5:5). What ended on the day Adam ate forbidden fruit was his opportunity to eat from the Tree of Life and live forever inside the Garden of God.

Returning now to Psalm 82, clearly the Psalmist was not writing to angels but to men; so for the Psalmist to record the words of God as corrective words, God was speaking to men when He called them gods. And with this being the case, a son of a human god is a human person ... the Roman emperor believed himself to be a god, as did pharaohs, both ruling over men in unjust ways.

The problem with reading Scripture “literally” lies in the multiple voicing that seeks to tear language apart being stronger than the single voicing that seeks to pull language together. M.M. Bakhtin's great contribution to the understanding of how language works was his explication of the ever-present struggle within language usage for words to mean many things rather than one thing, with these many things taking a text in many directions, thereby preventing the text from having a single meaning. Thus, the centrifugal forces embedded in word usage are stronger than the centripetal forces that would give to a text a single, authoritative reading.

A woman sent an e-message asking to attend services of *The Philadelphia Church*. In her message, she said she was backing away from Islam because Mohammad was not a prophet who heard messages directly from God, but from the angel Gabriel. She was certain that a prophet of God would receive “prophecies” or prophetic messages directly from God, not from an angel—and in her logic, God was outside the person so to hear a message from

God was to hear a message coming from outside the person via visions ... Joseph Smith received visions allegedly from God as well as from the angel Moroni.

John the Revelator received a vision from the glorified Christ Jesus, not from God the Father. God had given to the glorified Christ knowledge of what “must soon take place” (Rev 1:1), knowledge that the glorified Christ was to show to his bondservants (same verse). Thus, it wasn’t God who gave to John a vision, but the glorified Christ, an important distinction that needs to be remembered.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—and *he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter*. On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. (2 Cor 12:1–5 emphasis added)

John the Revelator knew that he was in vision, not bodily present in heaven (see Rev 1:10), but Paul is unsure for he could not determine whether the man caught up to paradise was his fleshly old man (outer self), or his new man (inner self). Regardless, what he heard in paradise cannot be told; could not be uttered with the tongue, suggesting that what he heard was like the seven thunders John the Revelator heard but was prohibited from writing: “And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, ‘Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down’” (Rev 10:4).

Now, backing up a little, on the day when Jesus entered Jerusalem (the 10<sup>th</sup> day of *Aviv*), Jesus spoke to God,

"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour?' But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." *Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered.* Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "*This voice has come for your sake, not mine.* Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." (John 12:27–32 emphasis added)

The voice of God was not heard as understandable words by the crowd surrounding Jesus, but heard as thunder. However, Jesus heard words. Perhaps others heard words, the ones who said that an angel had spoken to Him. But those who said an angel had spoken to Jesus would know what was said if they had truly heard words. They would know who had spoken. And only God can glorify His name. So in all probability, those who said an angel had spoken also heard noise like thunder, not distinct words.

If Paul in vision heard what man may not utter, and if John heard seven thunders that were not to be inscribed (written down), then the mystery of God as announced by the prophets would be fulfilled, but not before John must “again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings” (Rev 10:11) — the words already given to the prophets must be uttered again, with utterance being of two parts, (1) the delivery of the sound of the words by the speaker, and (2) the production of meaning in the mind of the hearer.

The sound of the mystery of God as utterance was delivered by the prophets of old, but the production of meaning in the minds of hearers is ongoing; so when visions are sealed

and kept secret until the time of the end, the godly production of meaning cannot occur until the time of the end. Therefore, the little scroll that was sweet as honey in John's mouth, but bitter in his belly becomes a metaphorical representation of the words of the prophets of old being sweet—the announcement of the coming kingdom of God is a “sweet” thing—but understanding the unsealed words of the prophets in the time of the end produces a sour stomach; for two thirds of humanity must perish in three and a half years. This is 4.7 billion people, a staggering number. Death on this scale will cause Babylon, the single kingdom of this world, to fall and be no more forever.

However, before God intervenes in the affairs of men, there will be nearly as many readings of Scripture as there are readers of Scripture, with each reading coming from someone believing that he or she has been called by God to save the world, or from someone determined to expose God as a hoax, a myth invented by superstitious men ... the person determined to show that the real Jesus was merely a man, a disciple of John the Baptist, will use the same texts to make his or her argument as will the person who is equally (or more) determined to save lost souls in the 10-40 window by having them profess with their mouths that Jesus is Lord and believe in their hearts that God raised Jesus from death.

Today, as I write, my words tear themselves apart as I hear how my writings are understood, with the majority who attempt to read what I have written quickly giving up the task and declaring my writings to be incomprehensible ...

*Language tearing itself apart* — this is not something Christian teachers address with congregations; rather, Christian teachers assume that Scripture speaks with a single voice—is monoglot discourse—with this single voice being that of their denomination or sect or heresy. But Scripture doesn't speak with a single voice: it didn't from the moment it was inscribed, for the heteroglossia that produced the text ceased to exist when the text was inscribed.

The preceding is a slippery subject to discuss: I tend to write convoluted sentences that circle back on themselves for the subjects I write about have been long discussed by clerics and scholars. I was neither. I was a smith, logger, fisherman, turned fiction writer before I returned to the university at midlife so that daughters could live at home rather than in a dorm when they entered college. Although I can write a simple sentence (subject, verb, object), I cannot convey what I want to say in prose that doesn't reflect the complexity of two things being one thing—of two sentences being one sentence. Thus I find myself resisting the centrifugal forces embedded in word usage by using more words to carry the message than are really necessary, these extra words being in place to limit meaning by dividing the meaning carried by each word into smaller and smaller parcels so that my words overwhelm and smother spinning centrifugal forces. But the mindset (my mindset) that produced these many words is in turned destroyed by the present moment becoming the next moment; for as soon as a thing is known, the thing cannot be unknown or not known. The conditions that existed linguistically, politically, theologically, historically, culturally before a thing was known were altered to varying degrees by the thing being known.

I am not the same person after I have written a passage as I was before I wrote the passage; for I too didn't know what was to be revealed as I wrote. So what's often seen in the many words that I write—words that impede centrifugal linguistic forces—is my journey of discovery; the logic that produced an understanding that didn't previously exist. When I began *APA* Volume One in June 2012, I didn't know that the Book of Acts was a Sophist novel. I had never considered the possibility that Acts wasn't history. But I soon realized that

a history requires the element of historicity to be present and that like Exodus, Acts lacked historicity. But in the case of Exodus, the first Passover and Israel leaving Egypt where the nation was enslaved forms the shadow and copy of individual Christians leaving sin as well as the shadow and copy of the greater Christian Church in the Affliction and Endurance, the 1260 days immediately following the Second Passover liberation of Israel (the nation to be circumcised of heart) and the 1260 days immediately following when the single kingdom of this world is taken from the spiritual king of Babylon and given to the Son of Man. This, however, isn't true of the Book of Acts which seems to have those things that happened to Christ Jesus in Luke's Gospel happen to the Church, with Luke's manger-birth scene being reflected in disciples holding all things in common at the birth of the Church.

The problem of the birth of the Church occurring on Pentecost is that Jesus gave to His disciples the holy spirit [*pneuma 'agion*] on the same day He was resurrected from death, not fifty days later ... the author of Luke's Gospel and of Acts didn't understand "the First Unleavened" (from Matt 26:17 — read the passage in Greek without the extra words translators tend to add); nor did he understand the Wave Sheaf Offering in relationship to the Feast of Weeks. He didn't understand the necessity for Jesus to be resurrected from death after the weekly Sabbath, and to ascend to heaven at the hour of the Wave Sheaf Offering as observed by Sadducees, and return that same day and appear to His disciples shortly before the end of the day. For the relationship of the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the weekly cycle in those years when the 15<sup>th</sup> day of *Aviv* falls on the fifth day of the week [Thursday] as will again happen in 2013; and the fourth day of Unleavened Bread (the 18<sup>th</sup> day of *Aviv*) falls on the day after the Sabbath (from John 20:1 *et al*), the first day of the week; and the seventh day of Unleavened Bread (the 21<sup>st</sup> day of *Aviv*) falls on the fourth day of the week [Wednesday] reveals what happens during the seven endtime years of tribulation, with the last day of Unleavened Bread being a high Sabbath and a type of the Sabbath of the Feast of Weeks, with the harvest of firstfruits that concludes on the Feast of Weeks and that comes to pass at the end of the seven endtime years of tribulation being the creation of the great light that rules the day (those who will be great in the kingdom — Matt 5:19) and of the lesser light that rules the night (those who shall be least — also Matt 5:19) of the fourth day of the "P" creation account.

Again the many words tend to hold linguistic centrifugal forces at bay: there are not many ways to read the last sentence of the preceding paragraph ... the sentence can barely be read, but when it is read, certain realities emerge: the seven weeks between the Wave Sheaf Offering when waved on the day after the Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Weeks represents the entirety of the Christian era, from when the spirit was given to the Wedding Feast in heaven. But these seven counted weeks also represent the seven endtime years of tribulation when all faithful Christians will live without sin because they have been filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God, with these seven years identified by John as the Affliction and Kingdom and Endurance of Jesus (see Rev 1:9 in Greek), the chronological structure of Revelation. Thus, when Christ Jesus is the life and light of men (John 1:4), the light about which "God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness' [from Gen 1:3] has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 4:6), the entry of Christ Jesus into His creation (*cf.* John 1:1–3; 3:16) forms the *light* of Day One of the Genesis "P" creation account. Thus, the seven days of the Genesis "P" creation account (Gen 1:1–2:3) are the abstract for the spiritual creation that began with Christ Jesus, with His return as the Messiah

occurring on the fourth day when the firstfruits of God are either the great light or the lesser light that rules in heaven (the day) or over the creation (the darkness of night). The main crop harvest of God (analogous to the wheat harvest) ripens to maturity and is harvested on the sixth day, when man will be created in the image of God, male [the head] and female [the body].

The motif of two being one is consistent throughout Scripture—and it is by how or by whether this motif is employed by the author of a text that a determination can be made about whether the author of the text wrote/spoke as a man or as commissioned by God, speaking the words of God with the man’s mouth, or writing the words of God with the man’s hand [“man” referring to all of humanity].

The spinning centrifugal forces that want to tear language apart can only be resisted: they cannot be stopped until Christ Jesus brings with Him a pure language, a new language that will have linguistic objects attached to linguistic icons in unbreakable welds. The coming Second Passover liberation of Israel will not be understood for what it is, but will be seen by too many Christians as the 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet Plague, the Second Woe, when it is no such thing. Only after the First Woe occurs will some understand that they have chosen to believe a lie ... the two witnesses that function in the Affliction as Moses and Aaron functioned in the wilderness will not be believed by greater Christendom; for the ministry of the two witnesses isn’t the conversion of Christians already filled with spirit, but the public defeat of Death, the fourth horseman (Rev 6:8) and the fourth beast/king (Dan 7:7) who is dealt a mortal wound when the single kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man.

When a book is read not everything contained in the book is known: the unread portion of the book is always unknown. Even after completing a book, much of what came early in the book is not fully realized; however, when a book is completed, where the book goes (the story told) is known. The reader can never again return to where he or she was when first encountering the book. Therefore, when the book is reread, the reader knows more than before and can take from the book more of what the book contains.

If a book isn’t worth rereading, it wasn’t worth initially reading.

The preceding paragraphs are easy to understand: the possession of knowledge forever changes a person—and changes everything the person will henceforth do. The Christian, say someone like Bart D. Ehrman, who enters the field of New Testament criticism and discovers that the Bible is a human book produced by human authors will be forever changed by this knowledge. Never again will this Christian believe that the Bible is the infallible word of God. Unfortunately, too often this now ex-Christian will cease believing that God exists ... knowledge killed faith, but only in English where <faith> has been separated from <belief> by the centrifugal forces of heteroglossia. In Koine Greek, whatever a person believes is what the person has faith in; thus, additional knowledge increases faith, rather than destroys faith. No amount of additional knowledge can destroy faith, but can only change faith to reflect the additional knowledge. And it is from this Greco concept of faith/belief that I write, with knowledge having increased my faith.

In minimalist prose, the reader must supply to the narrative what is not in the narrative, thereby causing the reader to take an ownership position over the text. It is for this reason that *Rabbit Runs* ... the minimalism of modern American fiction writers permits readers to own the story they’ve read—the story read belongs to the reader because it came from the reader. And this is opposite of what I do when explicating Scripture.

I am the antithesis of the minimalist; for I do not want you as the reader to insert what you presently know about God into my words. I want, rather, to push out—to expel from you—what you presently know about God. I want to force you to learn what you do not presently know, and what you cannot learn for as long as you remain a son of disobedience, a person who does not have the laws of God written on your heart and placed in your mind. Therefore, what I write is difficult to “wade through” for the person who already knows all there is to know about God; for how I write and what I write becomes a physical and spiritual obstacle that trips the reader with false knowledge, be it a Sabbatarian Christian or lawless Christian.

The heteroglossia of this moment when I have spent time “justifying” the convoluted prose I tend to write will pass with the writing of these words. Never again can I use language in the same way with the same effect. And you, when encountering these words however long after I write them, cannot fully recover the moment in time when these words were written.

Because the arrow of time points from order to disorder, if I write with a single, authoritative voice (write in monoglot discourse), those who come behind me will find multiple meanings in my words, some I would happily accept, some that are opposed to what I intend. Thus, I cannot write minimalist prose. What I can do, instead, is to employ disorder—the words of routed Christianity as these words flee before the Adversary—as an agent of “order,” a single authoritative reading of Holy Writ. Hence, in an army of regrouped words marching in the same direction, disorder is returned to order. Whether I have truly accomplished the job I was given will be determined when my words are attacked by agents of the Adversary. If his agents can rout them as has occurred to genuine Christian prose since the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century, then they too will be scattered and sent running for their lives as American Colonial Militias broke and ran when attacked by British regulars. But—here is the caveat—if the seemingly confusing order and rank of my words hold (because agents of the Adversary really don’t know where to attack first), then the time of the end is truly at hand.

I cannot return to not knowing what I now know, nor can you.

It is fairly easy to see how knowing what has happened changes a person or the culture of a nation when the thing-now-known is an event such as the outcome of a world war, or the loss of life and property that occurred in a volcanic eruption or in a tsunami. Post World War II America differed in how the nation perceived itself, in how the world perceived the United States from pre World War II America. After the war, American isolationism was not possible. With the dropping of the nuclear bomb, no person could return to the mindset of when the bomb didn’t exist. With the Holocaust and Nazi gas chambers, no person could return to the mindset of the world or of a nation before the industrialization of mass murder occurred. Concentration camps—internment camps—became “death camps”; whereas before the Nazis turned internment into a death sentence, Japanese Americans after Pearl Harbor submitted to being interned simply because of their ethnicity.

Since 1945 when the horrors of Nazi Concentration Camps became known to the world, there is an intuited reluctance to enter any camp, including a FEMA camp following a natural disaster. At some level, being ordered into a camp is linked to being rounded up to be killed.

Plenty of Americans will argue that the United States isn’t Nazi Germany; yet that line of emotional, patriotic reasoning actually runs counter to what Sabbatarian Christians have seen happen to fringe Sabbatarians ... after Ruby Ridge [the Randy Weaver affair, 1992] and

Waco [the David Koresh affair, 1993], two locations where America's Justice Department used the might of internal policing agencies against "odd" Sabbatarians, using deadly force in unjustifiable situations. The rules of engagement in Afghanistan give to Taliban insurgents more protection under the color of law than was extended to Randy Weaver, or for that matter, to David Koresh, a sexual predator.

There is nothing Justice Department officials can say or do to reassure American Sabbatarian Christians that a Sabbatarian—out of sync with the surrounding world by virtue of Sabbath observance—under investigation for even a misdemeanor will not be killed even when posing no immediate threat to Federal agents. With her infant child in her arms, Vicki Weaver posed no threat when she was killed by FBI Hostage Rescue Team sniper Lon Horiuchi. threatening because they are out of sync with the world around them. The Rules of Engagement (ROE) at Ruby Ridge were inconsistent with FBI's standard deadly force policy: the ROE at Ruby Ridge permitted FBI snipers to kill the Weavers whenever they were seen, including Mrs. Weaver when holding her child in her arms. After all, it was Mrs. Weaver who had come to believe in apocalyptic fundamentalism, and who was bringing her husband along with her. She was the greater threat to the Adversary than was Randy Weaver, shot in the back by sniper Lon Horiuchi but not killed. The bullet exited Weaver's right armpit—he wasn't supposed to die, not then anyway.

The United States of America doesn't shoot its citizens without reason. Neither did Nazi Germany send millions to gas chambers without reason—and this comparison by proximity will offend good Americans across the nation. For the death of one citizen, one Sabbatarian—even the death of a few dozen followers of a sexual predator—do not compare with the mass murder of millions. But the difference is in the number of dead, not in the underlying justification for differing ROE that permitted Federal agents to shoot to kill on sight.

A host of Sabbatarian Christians haven't forgotten that the Sabbatarian Anabaptist Andreas Fischer was hung [ca 1528 CE] for his religious beliefs, but lived afterward. When hanging didn't keep Fischer dead, the next time he was captured twelve years later [1540 CE] Fischer was beheaded because he preached what he believed.

Again, Fischer was an Anabaptist. So the question emerges, was Fischer killed because he was a re-baptizer or because he was a Sabbatarian. For eighth-day Anabaptists, Fischer was killed because he was a re-baptizer, but for Sabbatarian Christians, Fischer was martyred because he was a Sabbatarian.

What was the offense of Vicki Weaver?

By the fourth day of the siege of the Weaver family (24 August 1992) FBI Deputy Assistant Director Danny Coulson reevaluated the siege and wrote, "OPR 004477 / Something to Consider / 1. Charge against Weaver is Bull Shit. / 2. No one saw Weaver do any shooting. / 3. Vicki has no charges against her. / 4. Weaver's defense. He ran down the hill to see what dog was barking at. Some guys in camys shot his dog. Started shooting at him. Killed his son. Harris did the shooting. He [Weaver] is in a pretty strong legal position."

Yet with no charges against her, Vicki Weaver, the one who had become a fundamentalist Christian, was shot in the head while holding her ten month old baby in her arms. So the question must be asked even if there is no agreement as to its answer: Was Vicki Weaver shot because she was a Sabbatarian? The Weavers would not have been in rural northern Idaho except for her religious beliefs. So exactly how much of what happened

occurred because of what the Weavers, Randy and Vicki, believed religiously? Almost everything.

There was a prosecution of Lon Horiuchi that was dismissed, then reinstated, then dismissed again. The FBI sniper was only doing his job under the ROE in place ... Horiuchi couldn't be held responsible for his bosses authorizing a shoot-to-kill-on-sight policy by Justice Department officials, who simply didn't have all the facts.

What about the beheading of Andreas Fischer? Didn't both Catholic Christians and Protestant Reform Christians have all the facts? If Anabaptists stepped behind the Council of Nicea (ca 325 CE) to retrieve 3<sup>rd</sup>-Century CE Christianity were they not a threat to the Church built on the decrees of the Nicea? And if Andreas Fischer as an Anabaptist stepped back to the late 1<sup>st</sup>-Century to retrieve the doctrines and beliefs of the period when Matthew's Gospel was written, wasn't he and his ministry a threat to all other Christians? Wasn't the mere presence of a Sabbath-keeping Christian a threat-to, a calling out of eighth-day Christianity? For if Andreas Fischer was correct in his theology, everyone else in the world was wrong—and Fischer had credibility from being hung but living afterwards.

The idea that one man alone could have Christian doctrine correct was too much for Catholics and Protestants and even other Anabaptists. God simply couldn't be working through only one man ... how many men was God working through prior to the baptism of Jesus? One man, John the Baptist. And after John was beheaded, how many men was God working through? One man, Jesus the Nazarene. So why wasn't it possible, in an age when the Christian Church represented the dead Body of Christ, the Corpse of Christ, that God was again working through one man, Andreas Fischer, for a little more than twelve years?

The martyrdom of one man—Andreas Fischer—has multiple meanings based upon the mindset of the person, and so it is with all events as history itself is a minimalist record of what happened in an era that no longer exists.

Again, the meaning of a word, of a sentence, of a text resides in the auditor; resides in what the reader or hearer brings to the inscription or to the utterance. If the reader brings intellectual junk to a text, the reader takes from the text more junk; for in making sense of the text, the reader adds what he or she knows about the subject, about the age in which the person lives—the readers adds to the text what he or she believes is true—and the combination of text and reader knowledge produces a hybrid hyper text that isn't what the author has written and isn't what the reader previously knew. This hyper text doesn't exist in any inscribed form, but it is the document the reader read.

For the generation born in 1992, this generation now old enough to have children of its own, Ruby Ridge is virtually without meaning, an insignificant event in the course of American history. But for distrustful Sabbatarian Christians—*distrustful* because society is stacked against them even in America—Ruby Ridge and Waco are real occasions when unjustifiable force was brought against Sabbatarians because they were Sabbatarians. The U.S. Constitution didn't protect Sabbatarians in a compound with a sexual predator; Sabbatarians were killed along with the sexual predator. The U.S. Constitution didn't protect Vicki Weaver. And the Constitution will not protect any Sabbatarian once the Second Passover liberation of Israel occurs.

As Jesus would disappear into a crowd to avoid the escalation of certain situations, Sabbatarians Christians will need to disappear into their surrounding communities as best they can during the ministry of the two witnesses who will become the focus of worldwide attention (and anger) once the Second Passover liberation of Israel occurs—

Jesus left no record of Himself. No New Testament gospel or epistle was even written about Him until decades after Calvary. Yet once He lived, Judaism could not mentally return to the time before He lived: Judaism broke out in *Messiah fever*, which was either a cultural cause for Jesus' ministry (this argument has historical support), or was spread in conjunction with Jesus' disciples keeping knowledge of Jesus alive into a second and third generation of converts to the Jesus Movement. Either way, Judaism's case of *Messiah fever* became deadly when Jewish rebellion against Roman political authority nearly wiped out the XII Fulminata at the Battle of Beth Horon. And there was no going back to pre-Rebellion times. The result of the Rebellion left the temple razed and Judaism perpetually dispersed. Even today, nearly sixty-five years after the founding of the modern State of Israel, Judaism is without a temple; without a cultural place of worship; and is reduced to nodding prayers to the foundational stones of the temple Simon bar Kokhba began but never finished.

But it doesn't take a war to permanently alter the mindset of a people. For Sabbatarians who would not have supported David Koresh in any way, the mere mention of the name "Waco" produces more than remembrance of the deliberate destruction of evidence following tanks punching holes in plywood walls to gas the residents inside, the act of punching these holes igniting fires that killed nearly everyone inside ... if evidence could have been gathered from the burned debris field, would it be commonly known that Federal agents shot four of their fellow agents, the four that Koresh's followers allegedly killed? That was the case, but after the debris field was scraped into piles and trucked away—and with television cameras having been kept roughly two miles away during the siege of the compound—Janet Reno's version of what happened became the official version. And for Sabbatarians, the heteroglossia of pre-Waco America would never again exist post-Waco. At some level, every Sabbatarian Christian in America ceased to trust the integrity of the Federal Government because of what Janet Reno did, and because of what Eric Holder now does.

Christians have long memories. Christians wouldn't be followers of Christ Jesus if they didn't have long memories. And Christians do not forget that the powers of state crucified Jesus once He was betrayed by His people, the Jews.

However, the heteroglossia of a moment passes away with the moment itself ... the redundancy with which I write when explicating Scripture is my attempt to imprison the heteroglossia of the moment in words, from which this heteroglossia will slip away as wind does when bound by chains. But in many words, traces of this heteroglossia will remain for a while as if these traces were animal tracks around a water hole with a track here and one there becoming solidified in sedimentary stone.

The heteroglossia of ancient Jerusalem in the days of the prophet Jeremiah disappeared when Jerusalem's walls were breached and a remnant of the nation was taken to Babylon where the elite of the nation had been taken nearly a generation earlier ... everything that can be known about Jerusalem when Solomon's temple still stood is filtered through what was saved (valued) by a post deportation remnant of the nation.

In the future, other sexual predators will be forgotten—will disappear into the flotsam of history—but David Koresh will be remembered not for any good he did or for the evil he did, but because he represents in type how it is that in a nation of law allegedly under God Sabbatarians can expect to be shot on sight if they attract attention to themselves ... in the Ruby Ridge case, the Federal Government paid a million dollars to each of the three surviving Weaver children and a hundred thousand to Randy Weaver (a settlement of \$3.1 million) for the murder of Mrs. Weaver, again shot in the head while holding her ten month

old baby in her arms—and it all began with a missed court date for an offense that was dismissed, with Weaver receiving contradictory dates to appear.

The Waco case is more problematic, but the local sheriff could have served the warrant on Koresh without incident if he had been asked to do so. And what seems true is the Reno Justice Department wanted the incident, wanted to make an example of someone who was outside of social norms. That is what they got, a chance to make an example of an outsider—to shoot some weird Sabbatarian Christians that believed the end of the world was at hand. And again, I cannot condone in any manner the acts of David Koresh as a sexual predator. But tanks are not brought against other religious sexual predators and there have been others since Waco; however, they have all been Sunday observing Christians. It is Sabbath observance that separates Ruby Ridge and Waco from similar cases before and since.

One word, Waco, ceased to represent a city for Sabbatarian Christians and came to represent the threat the Justice Department of the United States of America poses to Sabbatarians. After the siege and destruction of David Koresh's compound; after the siege at Ruby Ridge, there was no going back: Sabbatarians cannot return to a time when Waco doesn't represent televised images distorted by heat-shimmer because of the camera magnification necessary to see what was happening, images of tanks punching the muzzles of their guns through the thin plywood walls of a poorly constructed compound, fire coming from the muzzle of at least one gun and the plywood compound erupting in flames. Oh, that fire coming from the gun muzzle was really a reflection off the gun, a flash of sunlight. And of course, the Federal Government had nothing to do with burning the compound to the ground while shooting anyone who tried to escape. Consult the official record of the incident if you have doubts. But the heteroglossia of pre-Waco America didn't exist post-Waco; for twice within two years Sabbatarians were shot on sight for reasons that were, of course, unrelated to them being Sabbatarians....There are no political prisoners in America: just ask Leonard Peltier. Likewise, there is no religious persecution.

The problem imbedded in the preceding paragraph is that a Sabbatarian numbered among the Elect will not be a sexual predator; would not have been at Waco; would not use force to oppose civil authorities; but would have been as the Anabaptist Dirk Willems of Holland was ... late winter 1569 CE, Willems was found to be an Anabaptist (a person who had been rebaptized in a Believers' baptism) who had held secret meetings in his home and allowing baptism of adults there. A thief catcher came to arrest him in the village of Asperen, and Willems fled for his life, crossing an ice-covered body of water. The thief catcher fell through the ice and couldn't get out of the near freezing water. At great risk of falling through himself, Willems turned back and pulled the thief catcher from the water and dragged him to shore, where the thief catcher wanted to release Willems, and would have if a burgomaster hadn't appeared to remind the thief catcher that he was sworn to deliver criminals to justice. Willems confessed that, yes indeed, he was an Anabaptist, and he was sentenced to death by fire. However, on the day he was to be burned alive, a strong east wind kept the flames away from his torso and head so death was delayed. It is said that the same east wind carried his cries of, *Oh my Lord, my God*, clear to the next town where his cries heard more than seventy times. Finally the judge ordered that Willems be humanely and quickly killed.

Waco doesn't represent the best of Sabbatarian Christians, but rather, the darkness of the Adversary's administration of his kingdom. No Sabbatarian should be deceived into

believing that the Adversary will give to the Sabbatarian favor of any sort for betraying his or her brother. As the story of Dirk Willems is common fodder for youthful Anabaptists, Willems being remembered in this world long after his peers disappeared into obscurity—but not remembered as a Sabbatarian as Andreas Fischer is remembered—the stories of Sabbatarian martyrs in the Affliction will be told for a Thousand Years. However, as Willems suffered great physical torment as he remained alive while his feet and legs were burned to ashes, Sabbatarian martyrs during the 1260 days of the Affliction will be killed without mercy, shot as if they are rabid animals, burned alive by allegedly civilized governments and peoples, most being in-name Christians.

The paganism of Hitler's Germany wore a *Christian* mask as six million Jews and approximately as many other, non Aryan, peoples were murdered in the Holocaust ... the genuine Christian will risk his or her life to save the life of even the one who would kill the Christian, ala Dirk Willems. But this isn't what's seen in Jesus' Olivet Discourse: during the Affliction,

Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and *you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake*. And then *many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another*. And *many false prophets will arise and lead many astray*. And because lawlessness will be increased, *the love of many will grow cold*. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (Matt 24:9–13 emphasis added)

The heteroglossia of 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Judah can only be approximated by endtime disciples; however, the heteroglossia of 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Judah changed day by day and was in 70 CE nothing like it was in 31 CE ... Jewish officials hoped to get along with Roman authorities when they delivered Jesus to Pilate, but after the Great Revolt began and certainly by the time it concluded, Jews knew there was no getting along with Rome. There was only defeat and reparations to be paid. So what was unthinkable in 31 CE—*they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake*—was in type a reality that had occurred.

Yes, Jesus was speaking to His disciples about what would happen to His disciples when He said, “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake” (Matt 24:9), but from here there is a difference between what Matthew records and what Mark records:

But be on your guard. For *they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them*. And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. And *when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the holy spirit*. And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. (Mark 13:9–13 emphasis added)

In Matthew's accounting of the same scene, Jesus says nothing about disciples appearing before governors and kings. Matthew's focus isn't on witnessing to leaders of nations but is disciples who fall away and betray their brethren, with many false prophets arising to lead disciples away from God.

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus warns His disciples that they will stand before governors and kings for His sake and speak words given them at the time ... when will His disciples speak to governors and kings? After the great buildings of the temple are thrown down, after many have come in His name to lead many astray, after there have been wars and rumors of wars,

earthquakes, famines—His disciple would not be speaking to governors and kings anytime close to when He was crucified, but would speak after the Gospel was first proclaimed to all nations (Mark 13:9–11). Only then would Jesus’ disciples be brought to trial and brother would betray brother and father his child.

The order of events differs in Matthew’s Gospel from similar events in Mark’s Gospel—and the gospel [good news] to be delivered differs. And these differences denote the difference between what Jesus said to His first disciples, and what the indwelling Jesus says to endtime disciples.

What wasn’t thinkable in 31 CE even if Jesus had vocalized the thought was thinkable by 70 CE, with this unimagined “thing” being not appearing before councils and being beaten in synagogues, not standing before governors and kings prior to being killed ... being killed without trial was nearly unimaginable in the Roman world. Yet in the Nazi industrialization of mass murder, trials were neglected as the machinery of murder was perfected.

Did Vicki Weaver, Randy Weaver’s wife, have an accusation or indictment brought against her before she was shot with her infant child in her arms? Did David Koresh ever appear before a judge to face his accuser before the Branch Davidian’ compound was reduced to ashes trucked away before any investigation could take place?

The difference in focus between Mark’s account of Jesus’ Olivet Discourse and Matthew’s account is the difference between the assumption that a person would stand before his or her accuser before being killed (again, the reality of most executions in the Roman Empire) and the industrialization of mass murder which actually predates the Industrial Revolution in the case of Medieval European pogroms when landed lords couldn’t repay their money lenders.

During and immediately following the Great Revolt of 66–70 CE, the crime of being Jewish was enough to get a person killed without the benefit of standing before his or her accuser. The heteroglossia of the post-razing-of-Jerusalem moment now permitted the author of Matthew’s Gospel to “realize” that Jesus’ disciples, hated by the entire world for His name’s sake, would be delivered up to tribulation (to affliction) and put to death without ever appearing before councils, governors, kings. The crime of being a Sabbatarian Christian was sufficient to warrant being put to death; thus, other brothers in Christ would find it advantageous to cease observing the Sabbath (to fall away) and to betray their brothers, children, parents, neighbors as the love of many grew cold and hearts hardened.

Understand the above: Matthew’s Gospel could not have been written for as long as an accused person received the right to face his or her accuser. Mark’s Gospel was written while the accused still faced kings and governors before being condemned to death. Mark’s Gospel was written when the State didn’t issue blanket condemnations; didn’t permit kill-on-sight ROE. However, when Matthew’s Gospel was written, the crime of being a Jew was enough to get the person killed-on-sight.

The difference between what Jesus said in person to four disciples—Peter, James, John, and Andrew—in private on the Mount of Olives (Mark 13:3), and what the indwelling Christ Jesus says to His disciples (all of His disciples) privately (Matt 24:3) is the difference in the heteroglossia of pre-Rebellion Judah and post-Rebellion Judea; is the difference between standing before accusers versus being shot without trial when trying to escape being burned alive.

The family of Randy Weaver was seemingly paid hush money so they would just go away in silence. Kevin Harris actually had to sue to get a settlement of reportedly \$380,000 from

the Federal Government, which had vowed that it would never pay anyone anything who had killed a Federal agent ... Justice Department officials ate crow.

An incident, sometimes as great as the First Jewish Revolt, sometimes as minor as Ruby Ridge, can be ascertained in the heteroglossia of the moment when a text was composed. For example, consider what the prophet Jeremiah recorded,

Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when it shall no longer be said, “As the Lord lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,” but “As the Lord lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.” For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their fathers. (Jer 16:14–15)

The belief of Jews in Jerusalem during the siege of Nebuchadnezzar was that God would deliver Jerusalem out of the hand of the Chaldeans; thus, Jeremiah’s words about a second Passover recovery of the people of Israel didn’t make sense. The only possible referent for the people of Israel returning from the north country would have been for the remnant of the House of Israel (the northern Kingdom of Samaria) to return to Samaria from where Assyrians had sent these northern tribes into exile—but how would the return of the people of Samaria cause Israel to forget about Moses and the Passover Exodus of Israel from Egypt? If anything, the return of Israel to Samaria would cause Israel to remember Moses and the Exodus ... the modern return of Jews from Russia is compared to the Exodus.

However, before Jeremiah revealed the words of the Lord [YHWH] about a second Passover recovery of the people of Israel, a second recovery of Israel was known from Isaiah’s prophecies (Isa 11:11–16), but this second recovery of Israel was not strongly linked to the Passover Exodus of Israel from Egypt; nor was it known that this second recovery of Israel would be of such magnitude that the Exodus would be forgotten ....

To this day, the Exodus has not been forgotten. And Jeremiah’s prophesied recovery of Israel has not yet happened. The return of the people of Israel from Babylon did not cause Israel to forget the Exodus. Likewise, Northern European and Russian Jews returning to the lands of ancient Judea post WWII has not caused the Exodus to be forgotten. Rather, every return of dispersed Jews is compared to the Exodus. Nevertheless, with Jeremiah recording the words of the Lord about a second Passover exodus of Israel—this time from the north country and from all countries where Israel had been driven—the return of exiles from the northern house of Israel and from the first invasion of the Chaldeans seemed assured. Jeremiah’s prophecy was interpreted to mean that the people of Israel would return through a victory over the Chaldeans, and this stiffened Jerusalem’s resolve not to submit to the Babylonian expeditionary forces that would eventually surround the city.

The mindset in Israel and the mindset of the Lord when He told Jeremiah not to take a wife in Jerusalem (Jer 16:2) ran counter to each, with Israel sincerely believing that the Lord would deliver His people Israel because they were His people, and with the Lord determined to drive Israel from the land because they had rejected Him and His commandments and instead worshiped Him as they worshiped the Baals and the Ashtaroah.

Now move forward a little more than two and a half millennia: the man of perdition (the lawless one, from 2 Thess 2:3) will be to greater Christianity as King Saul was to ancient Israel. This man of perdition “takes his seat in the temple of God” (*v.* 4), with the *temple of God* being the Christian Church (1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16), because he will be, 220 days into the Affliction, a respected Christian leader. He will be to Christendom as Saul was to Israel, with Saul’s initial humility being reflected in the man of perdition’s initial hesitancy to

speak for all Christians. But as Saul did not wait long before unlawfully sacrificing burnt offerings and peace offering after defeating the Philistines at Gilgal, the man of perdition will, on day 220 of the Affliction, get to work killing those faithful disciples that keep the commandments of God. The man of perdition, along with the false prophet, will issue new ROE that permit Sabbatarian Christians to be killed without trial, without appearing before kings and governors, or even being delivered over to councils or beaten in the synagogues of Satan.

The false prophet will come to the office of prophet that is already being held for him, and the false prophet will be like a lion who has had his eagle-like wings snapped off and made to stand on two feet as a man stands, while being given the mind of a man. He will be a demonic king that looks and acts like a man, but who still has the power of an angel. He will come conquering and to conquer, and none can stand before him, except for the two witnesses who are men but with the power of Christ Jesus.

As a novelist my prose style tends to be exhaustive, *literally* smothering the subject and the reader as I seek to address objections and counterclaims that will be made against what I write, but I cannot today prove with words that there is only one “right” reading of prophecy, or of Scripture. I can make a case for how I read prophecy since being called to reread prophecy in January 2002, but the *rightness* of my reading will come through the Second Passover liberation of Israel (the nation to be circumcised of heart). If no Second Passover liberation ever occurs, then my words will disappear into the flotsam of history as they should. However, if there is a Second Passover liberation of Israel that sees the death of approximately a third of humanity, all uncovered (by the blood of Christ) firstborns, then more attention will be paid to my words than they warrant; for it is the utterance in totality that has value, not the individual words forming the utterance.

The e-message received from the man who wanted only literal reading of Scripture illustrated for me the problem of multiple voicing that goes back to the Tower of Babel narrative; for a “son of God” is any living entity who has been fathered by the Most High God, regardless of whether that entity is angelic or human. The linguistic identifier <son of God> isn’t precise enough to establish difference. Plus, how most Christians today understand the identifiers <son of God> and <Son of Man> differs from how they were understood in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE and earlier. To us, a “son of God” has been fathered by God, but this wasn’t the case when the Lord came to the prophet Nathan:

But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, "Go and tell my servant David, "Thus says the Lord: Would you build me a house to dwell in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, "Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the

Lord will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, *I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body*, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. *I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son*. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever." In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David. (2 Sam 7:4–17 emphasis added)

Solomon was the seed that came from David's body that built an earthly house for the Lord—and Solomon would have been called a *son of God* even though his father was King David. But Solomon's throne was not established forever, the promise made to King David. Solomon's reign was conditioned on his obedience:

Then the Lord appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him: "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that my name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time. And *as for you, if you will walk before me as David your father walked, doing according to all that I have commanded you and keeping my statutes and my rules, then I will establish your royal throne, as I covenanted with David your father, saying, 'You shall not lack a man to rule Israel.' But if you turn aside and forsake my statutes and my commandments that I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will pluck you up from my land that I have given you, and this house that I have consecrated for my name, I will cast out of my sight, and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples*. And at this house, which was exalted, everyone passing by will be astonished and say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?' Then they will say, 'Because they abandoned the Lord, the God of their fathers who brought them out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them. Therefore he has brought all this disaster on them.'" (2 Chron 7:12–22 emphasis added)

The unconditional promise made to King David was not unconditionally made to Solomon, who could therefore only be a type of the "son of God" who would fulfill the promise made to King David. And it is in this relationship of the promise made to David being unconditional and the promise made to Solomon being conditioned on obedience where the literalness of the language loses its "literalness" and becomes metaphorical. And it is the death/rebirth motif of father and son (David being reborn in Solomon) where the multiple voicing of otherwise monoglot Hebraic discourse is made evident.

Did you get that? The unconditional promise made to King David remains unconditional, but not to King Solomon, but to the Messiah who cannot be a physical man even though he will be born as a physical descendant of King David. The Messiah is the Son of God as Moses by the meaning of His name was *the Son*.

King Solomon was a human son of God for as long as he did not turn aside from and forsake God's statutes and commandments and go and serve other gods.

By Matthew having his genealogy of *the Christ* come through David and Solomon, Matthew testified that Christ Jesus was the promised Son of God born to King David, but Matthew's genealogy of Christ is simply not true, nor even close to being true, something Matthew acknowledges himself: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the holy spirit" (Matt 1:18).

Joseph did not father Jesus. Matthew says so. So Joseph's genealogy, even if it came through kings David and Solomon, wasn't the genealogy of the man Jesus the Nazarene. So why claim it was, unless Matthew wants to establish that Jesus was the Son of God who was the beneficiary of the unconditional promise made to King David? And if Jesus was this promised Son of God that was the seed of David's body, then neither <seed> nor <offspring> as Paul uses the identifier in Galatians 3:16, 29 can be applied literally but must be applied metaphorically.

If seemingly literal unconditional promises are made to Abraham and to King David, with both Abraham and David having literal or physical descendants to whom the promises would seem to apply but in actuality applied only conditionally (Paul wrote, *Not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel* — Rom 9:6), then the "unconditionality" of the promises made was not for physical descendants but for spiritual or heavenly descendants. And as argued in Volume Four, Matthew's biography of *the Christ* is the biography of the indwelling Christ in the Elect. All *literalness* has been discarded.

If Matthew's Gospel is a problematic biography of the man Jesus—and it is—then what is it? Is it a biography at all? It seems to be a Greco-Roman biography, but it really doesn't do the work of a 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE biography. If the crucifixion of Jesus the Nazarene is the focus of Matthew's Gospel, then the crucifixion was a "small thing" that revealed the character of the man, and it is difficult to think of the crucifixion of Christ Jesus as being a *small thing*.

Understand, a Greco-Roman biography revealed through small things done by the person the inner self of the person. A Greco-Roman biography wasn't about those things that histories record, such as Alexander's defeat of Darius.

Because it isn't factual, did Matthew's Gospel make it into the New Testament canon by mistake? No! Not by mistake, which might not be the case for Luke's Gospel, ultimately the subject of Chapter Nine.

Matthew's Gospel blurs genre lines; for the idea of there being an inner self, a living soul, within every person was common fodder for the polyglossia of Hellenistic thought, but not so for earlier monoglot Hebraic thought. Thus, until the Hellenization of Judea through the imposition of Seleucid rule, a <son of God> was either an angel (see Job 38:7) or a human person who was to be righteous. This is how Genesis 6:2 would have been read before the deportation: a son of God was either, first, a "living being" not of this world as angels are not of this world, or, second, a righteous human person. But with Seleucid rule (more so than Ptolemaic) came the multiple voicing of Greek civilization that introduced the pantheon and demigods to the temple ... a demigod (half-god) is a Greek mythological figure with one parent being a god and the other parent being a human. They were human-god or human-angelic hybrids, with Hercules being a familiar example. And the Christian who reads Genesis 6:2 as angels being the sons of God who found the daughters of men attractive will believe that the mighty men of old were demigods—

If this were the case, why are not the daughters of men still attractive to angels? Why are there not demigods today? Did only ugly women get off the Ark? Did women somehow lose their beauty? Are they no longer like Venus of Willendorf?

The composition of the Book of Enoch could not predate Israel's deportation to Babylon where the nation encountered demigods, thereby introducing another possible reading (voicing) to the antediluvian account of the wickedness of men.

The Book of Enoch was made possible by the generous contributions of blind Polyphemus, son of Poseidon and Thoosa — I jest, but not really.

Permit the person who reads Scripture literally to continue doing so. He or she knows nothing and can do little harm, other than as a man to himself when he concludes that he must be outwardly circumcised. Then, if he is so foolish as to mutilate himself as an adult, let him beware of demigods who avenge the honor of their sisters when the man is most vulnerable ... what, no demigods?

Until the Hellenization of Judea, it would not have been possible for a Jew to grasp what it meant to be born of God except as Solomon, fathered by David, was born to sit on David's throne. The concept of an inner self cannot not be found in Hebraic Scripture.

Until the Hellenization of Judea, receipt of a second breath of life could only mean sequential life, one life followed by another life. Even as late as the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE, this was how Nicodemus perceived being born anew when this believing Pharisee came to see Jesus: "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" (John 3:4).

Sequential life underlies reincarnation, and this wasn't at all what Jesus references when He said that unless a person is born again [born from above] the person cannot enter heaven (John 3:3).

The prophet Daniel introduced an endtime resurrection to life to Israel when he records the angel telling him,

At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But *at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase. (Dan 12:1–4 emphasis added)

Going back to Homer's *The Odyssey*, Greeks recognized that there was an inner self in a person, a *shade* that would go to the underworld upon the death of the fleshly body of the person. Even the inner self of greatest of 7<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> Century BCE Greeks did not go to heaven, but dwelt in an underworld where godlike Achilles said to Odysseus that he would rather be a slave or a dirt-poor tenant farmer than rule in the underworld over *shades* (Book 11, lines 556–558).

Hold the above in tension with the concept of glorious "life" being given to those Israelites whose names are found written in a Book of Life that makes a distinction between who serves God and who does not (Mal 3:16–18). At about the same period in chronological time as when Homer's poetics were becoming widely known, within the ideology of Israel distinction was being made between the righteous and the wicked in life-after-death.

1. For ancient (pre-Plato) Greeks, the inner self of a human person was an indwelling lifeless shade, lifeless because the shade are consigned to the underworld after death. Only later did Greeks believe it was possible for a shade to go to heaven and be with the gods, but they lacked a criteria for going to heaven versus going to the underworld.
2. For ancient Hebrews, the inner self of a person slept in the dust of the earth as dust, but a Book of Remembrance was kept of every person—and from what was written in this Book distinction between the righteous and the wicked would be made at the time of the end.
3. Abram’s name was written in this Book of Remembrance, but not written as <Abram> but written with the inclusion of aspiration [*Abraham*] representing heavenly life, thereby giving certainty to Abraham that he would be as a star in heaven.
4. When Greek philosophers encountered the Jesus Movement, they “found” in simply believing in Lord Jesus (Acts 16:31) the criterion necessary to insure that a shade would go to heaven after death. They found salvation in a novel.

Until Hellenism ideologically overwhelmed Judaism, Hebraic thought did not have the concept of an indwelling immortal soul, an indwelling shade that looked like the person and knew the things the person knew but that lacked substance, lacked mass ... in visualizing what it was that ancient Greeks believed, a shade is like a shadow of the person that carries on after the person has died, but not here in this world but in an underworld that lacks geographical coordinates, which is what makes Odysseus’ journey to this underworld his greatest “trick,” for he entered and he escaped as a mortal man.

The Horse was a mere precursor to entering into death and escaping to return home.

Christians do not consciously think in terms of an indwelling immortal soul being a “shade” as Achilles was a shade in the underworld, but within the heaven/hell motif that underlies traditional Trinitarian Christian thought, the “soul” of a person will be consigned to everlasting torment in hell if the person doesn’t profess that Jesus is Lord and believe that the Father raised Jesus from death and thus be “saved.” So traditional Christian thought is the logical evolution of ancient Greek thought, with the flames of a match frying the “shade” of the person who never heard the name of Jesus the Nazarene. Traditional Christian thought/belief is as pagan as anything the blind-poet Homer wrote about the underworld and the pantheon.

What Jesus taught His disciples was that, yes, every human person had an inner self that was “dead” (Matt 8:22) through being consigned to disobedience as a son of disobedience. But unlike a Greek shade, this inner self would not have conscious thought after death, but would “sleep” in a Book of Life as if the inner self did not exist—unless, and here is an enormous caveat, God the Father drew the inner self of the person from this world and gave to this inner self indwelling life, His breath [*pneuma Theou*] in the breath of Christ [*pneuma Christou*], thereby resurrecting the inner self from death in a resurrection like that of Jesus when the Father gave life to the inner self of the man Jesus through His breath in the bodily form of a dove descending from heaven and entering into Jesus (Mark 1:10).

The problem academics practicing historical criticism face is their handling of Paul writing, “For if we [disciples] have been united with him [Jesus] in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Rom 6:5). And in the context of “baptism into death” (*v.* 4), Paul primarily references Jesus’ baptism and resurrection from

death through receipt of a second breath of life in the form of the Father's breath [*pneuma Theou*] entering into Him as a dove. But this is not how academics—as if dogs riding in a car—understand being resurrected as Jesus was resurrected.

The fleshly body of Jesus didn't die when He was baptized ... the fleshly bodies of Christians remain male or female, circumcised or uncircumcised, free or slave following baptism (Gal 3:28). So what does *baptism into death* mean except that the inner self—the already dead inner self that is like a Greek shade—dies and is raised/resurrected as a living inner self [soul] with indwelling heavenly life.

As a shade for an ancient Greek had no substance, the inner self of a living human person has no substance, no mass (is not of matter). Nevertheless, a Greek pagan believed that this immortal shade was real in a similar way that a traditional Christian believes that he or she has a “real” immortal soul, thereby permitting <shade> and <soul> to be used as interchangeable terms for the inner self with which a person is humanly born, with the shade humanly born consigned to the cold and dark netherworld after death and for traditional Christians, the soul consigned to the flames of hell. And neither ideological concepts can be proved with physical evidence. If anything, both can be disproved.

All early texts that have humanly born persons having indwelling immortal souls are fictional; are of pagan origin.

Because existence of an inner self for a human person can be neither proved nor truly disproved but is relegated to the realm of faith, it would be foolishness to write many words about the state of the dead. It is enough to use the few references that occur in Scripture to say that the inner self of a human person is without life when the person is humanly born, and that this inner self will “live” when the human person receives a second breath of life which was for ancient Israel sequential life, or life following physical death, with this second receipt of life causing the righteous to “shine like the brightness of the sky above, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever” (Dan 12:3). And this is in agreement with what Abram was told, “And [the Lord] brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be”” (Gen 15:5).

Usually the numerical aspect of what the Lord told Abram is emphasized, but Abram was recently out of Egypt where Egyptian cosmology held that Pharaohs would be stars after death for as long as their bodies remained here on earth; hence, their bodies were mummified at a considerable expense to the state. Abram would have understood his seed as being eternally living as stars seemed to be in the ancient world. Therefore, in what the Lord told Abram and what the angel told Daniel, the concept of eternal life for the righteous was evident long before Jesus told Nicodemus that a person must be born of God before the person can enter the kingdom of God. What Jesus introduced was the concept of simultaneous life, as in the possession of two breaths of life while the fleshly body of the person still lives.

All who are of the kingdom of God will be sons of God, either of angelic origin or of human origin. No son of the Adversary (see 1 John 3:8, 10) will enter the kingdom of God, with the euphemistic expression <the kingdom of the heavens> that Matthew uses in his Gospel in lieu of <the kingdom of the God> being an inappropriate literal substitution; for the Adversary as the reigning prince of this world is of heaven, and is already in heaven, and reigns over the mental topography of living creatures from heaven. Thus, righteousness becomes a defining characteristic of a son of God: all sons of God in heaven can be

identified as *the righteous* in that all believe God and have their belief counted to them as righteousness as Abram's had his belief counted to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6).

And in the above is significance; for Abraham [his name changed through the addition of aspiration/breath to what would be written about him in the Book of Life] still had to undergo a second journey of faith, a testing of his belief of the Lord in the matter of his seed being as stars:

After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. (Gen 22:1–4)

Two journeys of faith, the first from Ur of the Chaldeans to Haran then on to Canaan (Gen 11:27–12:9); the second coming to complete Abraham's belief of God about his seed being counted to him as righteousness—Paul neglects an important aspect of Abraham having his belief of God counted to him as righteousness (see Rom 4:1–13).

Abraham had already demonstrated obedience to the Lord when the Lord came to Abraham in vision in the land of Canaan, not in Ur of the Chaldeans, or in Haran, or even in Egypt. Abraham didn't again need to demonstrate bodily obedience. Rather he needed to demonstrate inner obedience, the manifestation of faith/belief in deeds that would seem to negate promises made.

Sacrificing Isaac after sending off Ishmael would have effectively ended any chance of his seed coming from his loins through Sarah. Abraham would have known this during the three days he journeyed to the land of Moriah; so he journeyed in faith and by faith and thereby had his faith tested in going to Moriah, what James understood:

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? *If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.* But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"--and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For as the body apart from the spirit [breath] is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead. (Jas 2:14–26 emphasis added)

James equates feeding the hungry and clothing the naked with faith, belief of God, and does so in a way that ties what Matthew's Jesus says about feeding the hungry (Matt 25:31–46) to belief of God in linked salvation ... the person who doesn't feed the hungry and give shelter to the homeless but who professes that Jesus is Lord and believes that the

Father raised Jesus from death will have his or her faith/belief tested as Abraham's faith was tested, meaning that this person will be required to sacrifice his or her inner self that is a son of promise; for the person has not, in failing to feed the hungry, made his or her faith complete.

Can the preceding be better said? James links faith to feeding the hungry, the criterion Matthew's Jesus uses for entering the kingdom of the heavens. Giving shelter to the stranger is what Rahab did and is a justification of faith by works. And James contends that faith/belief is dead until it is made alive by works of feeding the hungry and sheltering the stranger, or by the work of sacrificing the promised seed, which for Christians is the living inner self, the soul of the person. If the Christian is willing to sacrifice his or her own eternal life for another person, then the Christian has faith comparable to Abraham's—and this goes to the heart of the Anne Frank problem: would the Christian lie to protect the life of another person, the telling of the lie condemning the one who lies? Would the Christian place his or her inner self at risk of condemnation in the lake of fire in order to protect another person? Did Abraham place the life of his promised seed at risk when being tested by God? He did, and an "out" in the form of the ram was given to him as his knife was poised to take Isaac's life.

The Christian who betrays his or her brother will perish eternally. The Christian who dies rather than give up his or her brother will live spiritually, but the Christian who is as Rahab will also live.

In the traditional understanding of the death/rebirth motif in the imagery of a father and his son, Isaac as the son of promise represented the living inner self of Abraham. Thus, for Abraham to place Isaac's life in jeopardy equates to a born-of-spirit Christian placing his or her living inner self in jeopardy through an act of obedience to God.

For the Apostle Paul to identify disciples with Isaac, Paul makes disciples a nation of living inner selves that fulfill the unconditional promises made to Abraham. But of even greater significance, Paul places the man Jesus in the roll of Abraham and disciples in the roll of Isaac; thus disciples are the promised seed of Jesus. They are not randomly called, nor do that voluntarily come to Jesus. Rather, they are involuntarily born of spirit as Isaac was involuntarily conceived and humanly born. Ishmael, now, not only represents natural Israel but all Christians who have come to God of their own volition.

Abraham saved his fleshly body by journeying from Ur of the Chaldeans to Haran then to Canaan then to Egypt before returning to Canaan, but this first journey of faith was undertaken before aspiration/breath was added to his name that would be written in a Book of Remembrance [Life]. And Abraham could not save what he didn't then have, and this was seed from his own loins: a son to inherit his herds and flocks.

Before aspiration/breath was added to Abraham's name, he had his belief of God counted to him as righteousness ... demonstrated obedience—

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. (Gen 12:1–4)

—preceded Abraham having his belief of God counted to him as righteousness ... it would have been better if the Apostle Paul hadn't neglected this portion of the story:

We say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. (Rom 4:9–11)

Circumcision is the seal of righteousness—let this never be forgotten; for circumcision of the heart is the seal of the Elect's righteousness.

The patriarch Abraham is never born of God although aspiration/breath is added to his name, not to his inner self, an important distinction.

Adding aspiration to his name reflected the fact that Abraham had walked uprightly before the Lord and was blameless in his acts (even in the matter of Hagar). Adding aspiration required that Abraham's seed also walk uprightly and be blameless before the Lord. And the Lord signaled to Abraham that he, Abraham, would truly be a father to many nations, the righteous of this world, all sealed with the seal of circumcision. These nations would not come through natural biological descent but via promise; i.e., through starry or heavenly descent that would have them be as Pharaohs were thought to be. These nations would be of God as Pharaohs were thought to be of god, with the physical preceding the spiritual and revealing in mirror imagery the heavenly.

Abraham's first journey of faith tested the flesh for it was a long and arduous journey from Ur of the Chaldeans [Babylon] to Canaan then down to Egypt where Pharaoh took Sarah as his wife, before Abraham with Sarah returned to Canaan and lived among the Amorites, the Hittites, as a sojourner. Abraham's second journey of faith tested his inner self, externally represented by Isaac, his son of promise, with Isaac in the usual application of the death/rebirth motif representing his resurrected or reborn father.

The Apostle Paul had enough literary understanding to know that according to the death/rebirth motif as employed by Hellenists, Ishmael could not be the reborn Abraham, nor could any of the sons of Keturah be *Abraham*. Only Isaac could be the reborn Abraham. Thus, Isaac represented the living inner self of Abraham—an inner self that never received life while the patriarch lived physically. Isaac did physically for Abraham while he lived what receipt of a second breath of life, the breath of God in the breath of Christ, does for the inner self of a person while the physical body of the person still lives. Thus, the natural descendants of Abraham through Isaac could only be represented spiritually by Ishmael, the son of the slave woman. And the logic embedded in Paul's tour-de-force allegory of Jews being of Hagar whereas disciples are "like Isaac" (Gal 4:28) resides in Paul understanding that the inner self of the person must be both the son of God as well as the promised seed of Abraham.

Because Paul makes the allegory that has disciples being *like Isaac*, Paul reveals much about the mindsets of converts in Galatia and in other portions of Asia Minor. Paul borrows the standard death/rebirth motif employed in fathers and sons to make visible promised eternal or heavenly life being given to converts, life that comes from the convert being reborn as the convert's now-living inner self that will be placed at risk when the faith of the person is tested, with this testing calling for the death of the inner self if God does not intervene to prevent the person's old self from sacrificing the inner self.

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[This "Introduction to Volume Five" will be continued in Section 7.]

