Commentary — From the Margins
The Question Asked,
"Can You Help Me Understand Scripture?"

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Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name [*shem*] for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." And [*YHWH*] came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And [*YHWH*] said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, *let **us** go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.*" So [*YHWH*] dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there [*YHWH*] confused the language of all the earth. And from there [*YHWH*] dispersed them over the face of all the earth. (Gen 11:1–9 emphasis and double emphasis added)

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Second Principle
2.

The Old Testament was written in the Semitic languages of Hebrew and Aramaic, both of which are only partially alphabetized, with vowels not inscribed [not written]. In Semitic languages, inscription is of consonant clusters to which vowels or vowel pointing must be added when the inscription is read. Thus, closely related concepts—sometimes even distantly related concepts—are represented in inscription by the same root consonant cluster. So what is on the page is <u>not</u> read and cannot be read until vowels are added to the inscribed consonants, with which vowels are added reflecting what the reader or auditor believes the root cluster should linguistically represent. Therefore, meaning for the root consonant clusters must be held in the mind of the auditor before the passage can be read by the auditor. Reading is now not for self-instruction but to confirm what the auditor already knows; what the auditor learned when he or she was a student. As a result, the *Qur'an*, written in Semitic Arabic, can be read as either a book of peace or a book of struggle [*jihad*] depending upon which vowels the auditor was taught to insert between consonants of inscribed root clusters.

The New Testament was written in Greek, a fully alphabetized Indo-European language—no New Testament text was originally composed in Hebrew, despite what Christians of the Sacred Names Heresy believe. And the underlying linguistic differences

between Semitic and Indo-European languages change everything; for again, the meaning of a Semitic consonant cluster must be known to the reader before the cluster can be transformed into a word; whereas a word, every word, is completely inscribed in Indo-European texts. However, to words of an Indo-European text, meaning must be assigned to the fully formed words by auditors, who, though, are able—because of full inscription—to puzzle out an appropriate meaning for the unfamiliar word.

Moses records, "Then [*YHWH*] said to Moses, 'Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven'" (Ex 17:14)

Again, in Semitic language texts there is no way for a text to be reliably read if the author of the text doesn't recite [read] the consonant clusters he or she recorded to his or her audience so that auditors "know" what vowels to add to these consonant clusters to obtain the author's *meaning*. Thus, when generations pass without a Semitic text being reliably read to auditors, the intended vowels to be inserted in inscribed consonant clusters are not known for certain. Meaning is lost. The text itself is, thus, lost. For in Semitic languages, the same consonant cluster can—by the combination of inserted vowels—mean anything from a book to a writer to a library. And again the vowels necessary to produce the author's intended meaning are not inscribed, but must be known in advance by the auditor before the text can be read. So when the Book of the Covenant was found in the dilapidated temple of Solomon in the days of King Josiah and no Passover had been kept by Israel as commanded by Moses since the days of the judges (four centuries and more earlier), meaning was lost: Scripture didn't mean what it meant before. At best, only an approximation of the intended meaning of Moses' writings could be retrieved by Israel and the House of Judah. And what was principally lost were the always unpronounced linguistic determinatives used in primitive inscription: in particular, the determinative *<YHWH>* was incorporated into the script of Imperial Hebrew as the four consonant root cluster of an unpronounced noun naming the God of Israel.

At Babel, however, words [*linguistic icons*] were first separated from their meaning [*linguistic objects*], with no element of *Thirdness* being present to hold object to icon—

Words have no inherent meaning, but must have meaning assigned to them by their auditors [readers or hearers] either <u>before</u> the word is read [Semitic languages] or <u>after</u> the word is read [Indo-European languages]. This is contrary to assumptions about written texts that seem undeniably true, but that are not true ... I once heard G. Gordon Liddy on his radio broadcast say, *Of course words have meaning*, before going on to ridicule the idea that meaning is assigned to words by their users. But consider as an example word requiring meaning to assigned to it the word *<malix>* when it is initially read ... what does *malix* mean? It is simple to pronounce, and it was commonly used on the central Oregon Coast mid 20th-Century, where a new generation of grade school teachers began to use *show and tell* in classrooms. It wouldn't do for have a first or second grader to say, *Daddy shot a deer last night*, when it wasn't deer season. Yet, in Lincoln County, Oregon, with the highest level of poverty in the tri-state region of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, the only meat many if not most families could afford was *side-hill salmon*; hence, deer became *malix*, particularly when spotlighted. It was

socially safe for a first grader to tell his or her teacher that there was a *malix* hanging in the woodshed at home—and virtually everyone heated with wood.

In Southeastern Idaho, the <Sabbath> was Sunday and the culture was that of Latter Day Saints; yet in Southwestern Oregon, the <Sabbath> was Saturday and many inhabitants were Seventh Day Adventists. So the linguistic icon <Sabbath> will have its meaning assigned to it by the *reading community* (linguistic community) that uses the icon for its purposes. There may or may not be historical significance attached to the cultural assignment of a linguistic object [again, *meaning*, or the thing the word purports to represent] to a linguistic icon [the inscribed appearance or uttered sound of the word], but there will be the element of linguistic *Thirdness* that prevents mouse-size entities from being assigned as objects to the icon <cow>. This element of *Thirdness* prevents *side-hill salmon* from being "fish." This element of *Thirdness* informs the auditor that the speaker or writer isn't referencing salmon when using the phrase *side-hill salmon*, but is referring to deer or elk taken by nefarious means, the implied reason for not directly naming the prey taken.

For a couple of decades, I assigned Jonathon Swift's essay, "A Modest Proposal," to first year Lit students, and inevitably nearly half the class would accept Swift's ironic solution to the persistent problem of Irish poverty as believable, saying some form of, *Back then they ate babies* … no they didn't. Absentee English landlords were treating their Irish tenant farmers as livestock rather than as human beings; so Swift took what was being done by the English to the point of absurdity and suggested that the Irish butcher and barrel their babies, saying that an American friend had a recipe for making a ragout from barreled babies.

Instead of salting and barreling cod, Swift would seem to have the Irish barrel their own offspring—

How was a literary novice to know that what Swift seemed to seriously propose was the then prevailing practice of absentee English landlords taken to absurdity? The literary novice should have known: even the literary novice should, from common sense, know that civilized people don't eat each other; that some other meaning must be assigned to Swift's words before these words *make sense*. Unfortunately, too many of my students were unbelievably gullible … too many Christians are equally gullible, not realizing that a son of disobedience (*cf*. Rom 11:32; Eph 2:2–3) is not free to keep the Law and hence unable to free him or herself from "disobedience." Once a son of disobedience has been set free, this now former son of disobedience is "free" to keep the Commandments whereas previously, the son of disobedience of necessity transgressed one or more of the Commandments, with the Sabbath Commandment usually being the one transgressed as it is the least of the Commandments and hence the test Commandment. So what Paul writes about being set free is "explained" by Paul writing, "Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?" (Rom 6:16).

If a Christian who has been set free from serfdom to disobedience [slavery to Sin] returns to transgressing the Commandments—to break one Commandment is to become a law-breaker—the Christian voluntarily makes him or herself the child of the Adversary, with John writing

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure. *Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.* You know that He appeared to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen Him or known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. *No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.* For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. (1 John 3:1–12 emphasis added)

Being set free from the Law—from the penalty of the Law with its automatic death sentence for transgressions—doesn't "mean" that the person doesn't have to keep the Law and thus continue to live as a sinner in this world, but means that the person has been set free so that he or she can voluntarily keep the Law and thus obey *obedience* that leads to righteousness.

Unbelief of God caused Adam and Eve to be driven from the Garden of Eden; unbelief of God prevented the nation of Israel numbered in the second year (except for Joshua and Caleb) from entering the Promised Land; unbelief is sin before this unbelief is manifested in deeds of the hand or body. Thus, Paul wrote, "For whatever does not proceed from faith [*pisteos* — faith] is sin" (Rom 14:23); for in Greek, *faith* and *belief* are represented by the same linguistic icon.

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When *YHWH*, an always unpronounced linguistic determinative used to represent "deity" to ancient Israel, confused the language of the people who settled on the plain in Shinar, They [*YHWH* — from, *Let us go down*] separated linguistic icons—what the bricks being made were called—from linguistic objects, the bricks themselves ... the bricks didn't change. What each person heard the bricks being called, however, changed. What became confused was the sounds heard that were used to represent the bricks and everything else, from cereal bowls to husbands and wives. The people separated themselves into linguistic communities, and separated themselves one from another until they were dispersed across the face of the earth. Winston Churchill allegedly said that the United States and Great Britain were a common people divided by a common language: I've never had a vehicle with a *bonnet* and a *boot*, and in a nod to English speakers south of the equator, I don't put my shoes in the *cupboard* at night. I have, though, had many *rigs* with hoods and trunks.

Elohim is the regular plural of <*Eloah*>, with this linguistic icon deconstructing to the radical /*El*/(Strong's word #H410) that accurately translates into English as *God*, and the radical /*ah*/that represents aspiration or breath. The English linguistic icon

<God> and the Greek icon *<Theos>* are not appropriate translations of *Elohim*, but rather are appropriate translations of */El/* pronounced as heard in *Allah*, the Arabic equivalent to *Eloah*, that is "deity" plus this deity's "breath" of life.

   Elohim (Strong's word #H430), plural because of its *mem* ending, will deconstruct to *Eloah + Eloah* an undetermined number of times, with this number being found in the linguistic determinative *YHWH*, which deconstructs to the radical */YH/* and the radical */WH/*, with */H/*representing breath or aspiration … because meaning is assigned to words, for rabbinical Judaism today and for Pharisees and Sadducees in the days of Herod's temple, *Elohim* is singular and takes singular verbs and pronouns. However, in the redaction of Moses following the House of Judah losing the Book of the Covenant then finding it in the dilapidated temple in the days of King Josiah—

> And Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the Book of the Law in the house of [*YHWH*]." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. And Shaphan the secretary came to the king, and reported to the king, "Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen who have the oversight of the house of [*YHWH*]." Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king. When the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the secretary, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying, "Go, inquire of [*YHWH*] for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found. For great is the wrath of [*YHWH*] that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us." (2 Kings 22:8–13)

—the text of Scripture changed so that in only four places have the plural nature of the determinative *YHWH* been retained:

- Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. (Gen 1:26)

- Then [*YHWH*] God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. (Gen 3:22)
- And [*YHWH*] said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." (Gen 11:6–7)
- And I [Isaiah] heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isa 6:8)

   With Israel's Babylonian captivity, Israel began to *sing* the linguistic icon *<Adonai>* when coming upon the linguistic determinative *YHWH* when reading Scripture aloud. And in the icon *Adonai* is seen a veiled awareness of the determinative's plurality; for in deconstructing *Adonai* into three radicals—*/a/+ /d~n/+ /ai/*—and then inserting these radicals where vowels would be inserted in a Semitic root consonant cluster, the always unpronounced linguistic determinative reveals its plural nature: $/Y^aH/+ /^{d\sim n}/$(meaning *another such*) + $/W^{ai}H/$.

   Now, John 1:1–3 can be read:

In [*arche* — primacy] was the Logos [*'o Logos*], and the Logos [*'o Logos*] was with the God [*ton Theon*], and [*Theos*] was the Logos [*'o Logos*]. [*Outos* — this one] was in [no definite article: *arche*= primacy] with [*ton Theon*]. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made.

In Greek, definite nouns need definite articles. The link between article and noun is so tight that the definite article alone can be used as a pronoun for the noun:

The Greek linguistic icon *<arche>* cannot be translated into English as *<beginning>* without the addition of the definite article *<the>* … it should not be translated as *<the beginning>*, a definite moment in time, but as *<primacy>* an attribute of *headship*, as *Tiberiou Kaisaros* was given primacy equal to that of Augustus Caesar in 13 CE, a little more than a year before Augustus died in 14 CE, and Tiberius became the sole first citizen of the Roman Empire. However, most texts intended for novices will have Tiberius becoming Emperor in 14 CE without any other detail surrounding his ascension to the throne so no interregnum would occur.

In the third clause of John 1:1, there is no definite article for *Theos*; rather *Theos* [masculine singular nominative case] shares the definite article of *'o Logos*, also masculine singular, nominative case, thereby disclosing that *Theos* [being God] is an attribute of primacy that *'o Logos* possessed. But *'o Logos* is separated from *the God* [*ton Theon* — masculine singular, accusative case] by the linguistic icon *<pros>*, translated as "with" or "of," either of which prevents the Logos from being *the God*. Therefore we find Paul writing,

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2:5–11)

According to Paul, Christ Jesus was in the form of God and had equality [primacy] with God before entering this world as the unique Son of the Logos, the deity who created all things physical.

According to John, the one who became Christ Jesus was the Creator of all things physical: this one—the Logos, an *Eloah* [Arabic, *Allah*]—entered His creation as His unique Son (John 3:16; 1:14) not to condemn the world but to save it by leaving His word [*logos*] with His disciples (John 12:47–48) … as Christ Jesus spoke only the words of God the Father (*v*. 49) and hence was the living personification of the Father's words, Christ left His words with His disciples so that they would be living personifications of His words as He was the personification of the Father's words. This does not mean that Jesus did not have preexistence prior to entering His creation as His unique Son; for in His prayer before being taken, Jesus prayed, "'And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed'" (John 17:5). But it does mean that without understanding the Father and the Son are two deities that form one God as the linguistic determinative *YHWH* disclosed to ancient Israel (and as King David in his latter years understood), the person is not born of spirit and lacks

indwelling eternal life: "'And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent'" (*v.* 3).

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When a person realizes what Paul knew and understood—Christ Jesus as the Logos was the God into whose presence Moses entered—then the person can read and assign better linguistic objects to the icons of Paul:

> For I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For *they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ*. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. *We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did* and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. (1 Cor 10:1–11 emphasis added)

In the song Moses composed as ratification of the Moab covenant, Moses sung about the Rock that followed Israel:

> Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak,
>> and let the earth hear the words of my mouth.
> May my teaching drop as the rain,
>> my speech distill as the dew,
> like gentle rain upon the tender grass,
>> and like showers upon the herb.
> For I will proclaim the name of [*YHWH*];
>> ascribe greatness to our God!
> The Rock, His work is perfect,
>> for all His ways are justice.
> A God of faithfulness and without iniquity,
>> just and upright is He.
> They have dealt corruptly with Him;
>> they are no longer His children because they are blemished;
> they are a crooked and twisted generation. Do you thus repay [*YHWH*],
>> you foolish and senseless people?
> Is not He your father, who created you,
>> who made you and established you? (Deut 32:1–6)

Moses' poetics are simple; they are not complex as David's is. Rather, they directly reflect the chiral nature of Hebrew narrative: the first presentation of an idea, of a concept is physical. The second presentation of the same idea is spiritual. Together, as a husband and wife form one flesh, the physical and the spiritual presentation of the same concept form one thought, or thought-couplet. Permit me to demonstrate:

> Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, [the physical presentation of head couplet]
>> and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. [spiritual, head couplet]
> May my teaching drop as the rain, [physical/physical, 2nd-couplet]
>> my speech distill as the dew, [spiritual/physical, 2nd-couplet]

like gentle rain upon the tender grass, [physical/physical, 3rd-couplet]
  and like showers upon the herb. [spiritual/physical 3rd-couplet]
For I will proclaim the name of [*YHWH*]; [physical/spiritual, 4th-couplet]
  ascribe greatness to our God! [spiritual/spiritual, 4th-couplet]
The Rock, His work is perfect, [physical/spiritual, 5th-couplet]
  for all His ways are justice. [spiritual/spiritual, 5th-couplet]
A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, [physical/spiritual, 6th-couplet]
  just and upright is He. [spiritual/spiritual, 6th-couplet]

Physically, *I speak*; spiritually, *earth hears*. Physically, *my teaching drop as rain*, little balls of waters, closed into spheres by the surface tension of the water, Spiritually, *my speech distill* [makes fine] *as dew*—each of my teachings contain many small droplets that refine principles given, and so on.

As a Semitic language, Hebrew is only a partially alphabetized language: even today, vowels are not inscribed in adult texts, but must be added by auditors. Only consonant clusters are inscribed. Hence, Hebraic poetics cannot be "locked together" phonetically (that is by the sound of words through either end rhyme or alliteration). Verses are held together, one next to another ideologically or conceptually. The "meaning" to be assigned to Hebraic consonant clusters [partially inscribed *words*] must be known *before* vowels can be assigned to these consonant clusters; for again, the combination of vowels added to a root consonant cluster can cause the cluster to "mean" anything from a book to a writer to a library. Whereas in Indo-European languages that are fully alphabetized auditors encounter fully inscribed words to which meaning must be added, in Semitic languages [Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic] that are not fully alphabetized, meaning must be known before a word can be formed; hence, much greater emphasis is placed on rote memorization of texts that will be "read" later. And the pattern used to establish meaning is that of the physical presentation of an idea, followed by the spiritual presentation, what Paul *knew* and *expressed in the head citations* [Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 15:46] of the first section of this Commentary.

In Hebraic poetics, thought couplets can be employed prophetically as will be seen in the following section.

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