

A Philadelphia Apologetic

Volume One

Introduction & Chapter One

Since the publication of the second edition of *A Philadelphia Apologetic*, enough new understanding has occurred that the second edition is no longer current, the unfortunate reality of continuing to grow in grace and knowledge. Therefore, before a third edition can be published in hard copy—with this third edition being at least two volumes in size—forthcoming chapters of this third edition will be here e-published.

Introduction

In 1990, on a discount table in an Anchorage, Alaska, outlet of a national-chain bookstore, I picked up an odd-dimensional book titled (paraphrased) *All You Need to Know About the 1960s*. I read the book, but I didn't recognize the decade despite having lived through it. I graduated from a small coastal high school in 1963, attended college for two years, then returned to the Oregon Coast and opened a gunshop not far from where I graduated. Three times between 1964 and 1966, I tried to enlist, knowing I would probably go to Vietnam. Three times between 1967 and 1970, I received draft notices. I was turned down each time. Too muscular. The Army wanted me. I built very accurate rifles: I certainly would have been an asset to an armory unit. I shot competitively. I wanted to go. Many of my customers were Korean War veterans; some were already Vietnam veterans. The local culture was pro-war. But the military had a height-to-weight chart that excluded me. I didn't fit. I wasn't needed.

Not fitting into a slot on a chart, like Robert Frost's *road not taken*, made all the difference. I did sixth, seventh and eighth grades in one year, started high school when twelve, college when sixteen, then after a twenty-three year hiatus, returned to college—to graduate school without an undergraduate degree. Idaho State University told me that they would not give me a Doctor of Arts degree in English as my first degree; that I had to complete my Master of Fine Arts degree in Creative Writing at University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) first. I did. But I didn't return to Idaho State's English program. Rather, the road taken led to Little Egypt.

In the 1960s, my customers were nearly all loggers and mill workers. I didn't know any male with long hair, didn't personally know anyone who smoked pot or took LSD, didn't know a Vietnam War protestor or a draft dodger, couldn't have found psychedelic music on a local radio station even if I had wanted to listen to it. The protests and promiscuity detailed in the *All You Needed to Know* book was the literary record of a decade that didn't happen where I lived. Yet, a century from now, if someone who lived along the Oregon Coast during that defining decade doesn't write a competing historical narrative, the 1960s of San Francisco will become the 1960s of Siletz, Lincoln City, Depoe Bay, Oregon. Our history, my history will be assigned to us; for history is assigned by the dominant culture. It will be assigned by those academics that burned draft cards and chanted, "Better Red than Dead." I heard that slogan, but didn't believe it then; nor do I believe it now, for its extension is that it's better to compromise with sin than to believe Christ and be willing to die for Christ.

The majority of humanity is assigned its history by a literate minority. Memories fail. Heirs forget ancestors within three or four generations with very few exceptions. Most Americans leave no inscribed record of themselves. They will merge into a faceless horde that consumed too much, polluted too much, and meddled too often in the affairs of other nations. Those notable individuals that excelled in life will vie for a finite number of column-inches in historical texts as all accomplishments are squeezed into fewer and fewer inches by each succeeding generation. Life is so squeezed out of these accomplishments that they lie dead on pages of too-often boring texts as more and more individuals disappear into the flotsam of the past. George Washington is reduced to a few paragraphs in junior-high textbooks as Osama bin Laden temporarily shouldered him aside in 2001, the year when a computer was going to rebel. But HAL didn't happen. The Space Odyssey hasn't developed as expected. That movie has been mostly forgotten, and is now a period piece that remains as spindrift beached during a flood of scientific optimism. History, that narrative of who we are and how we arrived at this particular

place in time, a sea of change, includes and omits selected events and incorporates a few individuals, leaving the mass of men and women to return to dust as if they never lived.

Historical winners are individuals or ideologies that somehow split the mainstream without being pushed into the margins of culture, for the difficulty encountered by every marginalized literature, ideology, or individual is that the dominant culture defines them. Those who write the historical accounts will define the beliefs of those who clung to the cultural fringe; will assign to them their values, their accomplishments, even their relationships with their god[s]. My 1960s will become the same as the 1960s of students who protested the Vietnam War if I am unable to resist definition by the dominant culture, which remains an alien landscape, a hostile mental topography that values material success and mocks rigid adherence to moral scruples.

At one time I, too, mocked adherence to “law” of all sorts, the legacy of the 1960s in its rebellion against authority.

When I encountered the Cathars of Langue-doc in the historical narrative, I didn't read the writings of their Perfects. I couldn't find their transcribed sermons as I can those of John Calvin. Rather, their beliefs, which were once historically significant, come forward from their accusers, their persecutors; from their trial records, edited to present the worst possible indictment of their ideology. And the same applies to the Carthaginians and their practice of offering their firstborn children to their god, a practice of Canaanite cultures adopted by Israelites. Roman accounts of Carthaginian culture and practices, or Greek accounts can be found. But other than for Plutarch's translation of a parchment containing sailing instructions to North America, and an extensive treatise on agriculture, Carthaginian writings, at least at first inspection, haven't survived. Their record of who they were, of how far they traveled beyond those sailing instructions, of what they thought didn't survive Rome's victory in its Punic Wars.

The history of the Dakotas wasn't written from Red Cloud's perspective, nor was the history of the French & Indian War written from the perspective of an Illinois *habitant*. A Cherokee did not write the history of America's Heartland (and in 2005, despite an expansive body of literature, a derivative fellowship of the former Worldwide Church of God was unable to define itself after a Wisconsin massacre). Rather, in each case the dominant culture assigns a history. I remember being taught in grade school that no one survived the massacre at Little Big Horn. I even remember a song about the lone horse that survived. But thousands of warriors survived the battle. They were Lakota and Northern Cheyenne and a mixture of other peoples. Their history, however, is suspect. Their experiences have been devalued by the prevailing culture. Instead, our recent national history assigned them the role of bad-guys in a monomyth about the solitary frontiersman prevailing over all obstacles, natural and alien, to *tame* the wilderness.

The wilderness that remains to be tamed isn't geographical. It isn't outer space, but the inner mindset of all human beings, consigned to disobedience for a season. This wilderness won't be tamed by good works of social reformers, or by world evangelism. Humanity will not evolve mentally in a philosophical tidal pool as John Steinbeck apparently believed. Rather, human beings are confined to a round cage as if we were laboratory mice, with our mental and physical landscapes restricted to what we can presently observe.

Our confinement will end. The overthrow of the prevailing power structure has begun, and this overthrow will not be quiet, or smooth, or bloodless. A new history will be substituted for the narrative now transmitted from generation to generation. It will be an inclusive history that remembers each of us. And there is little we can do to alter the portion of the narrative that has already been written. What we can change is what will be recorded about us today, and tomorrow.

This apology is my resisting the dominant culture's attempts to define who I am and what I believe. Such attempts began the moment I identified myself as a Christian.

The identifying term, *Christian*, carries with it the expectations of historical orthodoxy, Hellenistic in ideology and Roman in structure, a virtual Trojan horse by which Greek philosophers won the empire that neither Greek armies nor navies could win. Lost in the historical orthodoxy is the Hebraic movement from hand to heart, from physical circumcision to spiritual circumcision, with the history of a physical nation here on earth being the history of a spiritual nation in that portion of heaven within the bottomless pit, with geography representing mental topography. Lost is belief that the visible reveals the invisible, and that the physical precedes the spiritual. The traditions of men were long ago canonized. Shadows have sealed prophecies. And the enlivened shadow of the Christian Church [i.e., the history of Israel] has been either rejected by Christendom as meaningless, or studied as if the shadow were the reality instead of the example, written so that Christians should not aspire to evil. So the identifying term *Christian* has come to signify the scared surface rather than the substance of a way of life that tolerates no hypocrisy.

But Christians are traditionally distinguishable by their hypocrisy. They profess to love Jesus, but they don't believe what He said. They profess to have Jesus living in them, but they won't live as He lived. With exceptions, Christians want the commandments in schools, but not in their lives. They claim that they are no longer under the law, little realizing that the law will be inside the person, written on hearts and minds. Murder committed with the hand has become anger or hate committed with the mind. Adultery committed with the body has become lust committed with the mind. Sabbath observance wasn't changed to another day, but went from what the body did on the seventh day to what the mind thought. What had been outside has relocated itself to inside the person. Thus, the single most identifying trait of the Christian Church is commandment breaking, for to break one breaks them all.

Unless a person is in the same reader community that I am, the person will not read texts the same way I do. That is, unless the person has the spirit of God and is part of the Philadelphia church that exists as a small flock with "little power" (Rev 3:8), the person can see how I read texts, might even appreciate how I read texts, but won't necessarily agree with my readings, and might even vigorously disagree. Although every text will support more than one reading, no text will support every reading. Individuals who argue for a single authoritative reading of Scripture are, probably, disappointed by the denominationalism that has fractured the visible Christian church. These individuals usually believe that they have found the truth, and all who disagree with them are wrong and are part of an apostate church. Such individuals have yet to realize how little they know even when they hold a facet of Truth.

There is one true Church. There can be no more. And that true Church consists of all who have the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον — or in Roman characters, *pneuma hagion*], a descriptive expression for having received birth-from-above through receipt of the Breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ].

Denominationalism is *prima facie* evidence that Christendom today does not represent a living Church that is the one true Church. Rather, Christendom is collectively a spiritually lifeless assembly against which the gates of Hades will not prevail, for the last Elijah will restore all things, including life to the one true Church. But presently self-identified *Christians* are not spiritual people, but are still of the flesh, following Martin Luther, or Menno Simons, or Jacob Amman, or Ellen G. White, or Herbert W. Armstrong, or a host of other men and a few women as if John Calvin or George Fox or Joseph Smith or any of many human beings give growth to the Body of Christ. What the Apostle Paul wrote to the saints at Corinth still applies to *Christians*: "For when one

says, 'I follow Paul,' and another, 'I follow Apollos,' are you not being merely human" (1 Cor 3:4). Is not the person who cites the writings of Ellen G. White or of Herbert W. Armstrong to support a theological precept being merely human? When Jesus cited Moses to refute the devil, He said (paraphrased), "Man shall live by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matt 4:4 — citation is from Deut 8:3). *Man shall live by the words of God, not by the words of other men or women who wrote about God.*

How is one to know whether Moses talked with God and faithfully delivered to Israel the words of God? How is one to know whether the Apostle Paul delivered to 1st-Century saints the words of God rather than his own words? Or how is one to know whether Joseph Smith received another testament by an angel or by a demon, or whether the *Book of Mormon* sprang from his forehead as Athena sprang from the forehead of Zeus? Did Ellen G. White possess the "spirit of prophecy," or was she merely channeling with familiar spirits?

By faith, Observant Judaism accepts Moses as a genuine servant of God, but does not accept what Ananias told the Apostle Paul: "The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from his mouth" (Acts 22:14). Judaism does not accept the words of Paul as being the words of God. Likewise most of Christendom does not accept the *Book of Mormon* as another testament of Christ Jesus; nor does most of Christendom believe that Ellen G. White possessed the spirit of prophecy. Thus, to live by every word of God becomes a matter of faith, and those who believe that a particular individual speaks the words of God will inevitably become followers of that individual, the reason why there must be a restoring of all things through events that are unquestioningly of God, not necessarily through public miracles but through sealed prophecies being unsealed by those who are of God.

Just as God established in the days of Korah that even though all of Israel was holy, He spoke only through Moses, God must again perform miracles and fulfill prophesied events to establish the creditability of those who speak His words. Therefore, God sealed endtime prophecies, keeping these prophecies secret and not understandable until the close of the era for the purpose of establishing who speaks His words.

The miracles Jesus performed established His credibility: as Nicodemus told Jesus, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him" (John 3:2). But not all believed Jesus, or the miracles. The temple leaders sought to kill Jesus because He healed an invalid of thirty-eight years on the Sabbath; they sought to stone Him because He called God His Father; and they did kill Him because it was better for one man to die than all of Israel.

When the Creator of all-that-is married Israel from atop Mount Sinai, the One whom the Apostle John identifies as *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος] entered into a covenant relationship that could only be broken by death. Either He had to die, or all of Israel had to die before either was free to marry another. So for love of Israel, *the Logos* entered His creation as His only Son to die.

A story that begins with marriage will end with marriage. What happens in-between is the story that has been concealed from those who have heard but did not understand the mysteries of God; from those who have seen but did not perceive lest they might turn to God beforehand, repent, and be healed. The story in-between has been concealed by the "physicality" of the creation so that Israel could not "find out what God has done from the beginning to the end" (Eccl 3:11).

Circumcision received in the flesh by the hands of another man will make part of a man well; circumcision of the heart by spirit and not by the law makes the whole person well, for only when the heart has been cleansed by faith (as the penis is cleansed with wine or alcohol) can it receive spiritual circumcision. And it is the disciple's faith that will be counted to the disciple as righteousness: it is by faith that an uncircumcised person

will keep the precepts of the law and thereby have his (or her) uncircumcision counted as circumcision (Rom 2:26).

Christianity is an individual relationship between a Believer and the Father, with Christ as the Believer's high priest. Every Christian is a servant of Christ, and a son of the Father. And Christianity is exclusionary in its claim to being the only way to everlasting life. It states there is no other way to the Father than through Christ, the head of the true Church—and for this exclusivity, I make no apologies.

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Chapter One

1.

Grammar rules are always descriptive, not prescriptive; yet these rules become prescriptive when a language transitions from “natural” users producing “uneducated” texts to instructors teaching novices how these natural users constructed information ... grammar rules follow usage and do not establish initial usage; however, once these rules are codified, the educated producer of texts is obligated to follow them whereas the illiterate users retains the freedom to establish new rules as the situation warrants, for imbedded within the human mind is a language use template that determines how communication should occur, with this template probably predating the confusing of languages at Babel. Hence, the person who learns a language through the necessity of communicating in that language with educated users of the language tends to rigidly follow rules whereas the unsophisticated user employs the language however the person’s mind conceives that communication can best occur. So the person who uses a language by faith, believing that what the person uttered will be heard and understood, bends or ignores grammar rules that, again, are not really rules but observations about how others who have gone before used the language.

An example of an English grammar rule that isn’t a rule pertains to the use of double negatives in a sentence: if a person says, *I don’t want no potatoes*, no reasonable person believes that the speaker wants any potatoes. One negative doesn’t cancel out the other to make a positive, but a mid 18th-Century grammar book asserted that was the case and educated English users have since been stuck with a nonsensical rule, for in one line of Chaucer’s poetry there are four negatives, used to emphasize the negative.

An instructor of first year New Testament Greek will tell his or her students some variation of *words switch genders for phonetic reasons and for reasons of analogy*, and that there is *mandatory inclusion of the definite article as long as the noun is definite and not abstract, that the article has to be there and has to agree in gender, case, and number with the noun*, and that *sentence order is used for emphasis and sentence order in Koine Greek is most commonly subject, verb, object*, whereas in ancient Greek it was subject, object, verb. This New Testament Greek instructor will make a point of *emphasizing it is impossible to know or recognize the noun’s gender from the inflected form of the article or from the noun’s case ending; therefore, it is crucial to learn the lexical gender of every second declension masculine, feminine, and neuter noun*, and that *if the article τὸν modifies a noun, it must always be parsed according to the lexical gender of the noun thus reflecting the grammatical agreement between the article and the noun it modifies*. But the renowned translator Robert Fagles rendered Homer’s *te theon te* as “every god” (1.22 *The Odyssey*), determining that the article “te” best reflected the idea of each of many gods taking possession of “pity.”

If it is crucial for a student of Koine Greek to learn a noun’s lexical gender, what is the student learning when meaning must be assigned to words by the auditor? Is not gender also an assignment made through observing how the noun functions and what articles have been assigned to the noun ... here is a major problem: saying that meaning is assigned to words would be akin to telling an English grammar student to read E.E. Cumming’s poetry to see how composition rules might be applied. If meaning must be assigned to words, who does this assigning, reader communities as small as a single reader? Or have scholars reserved to themselves the right to assign meanings? And if meaning must be assigned to the words forming Holy Writ, then is the text infallible?

Can any text be infallible, a condition of both creation and receipt? Or is Scripture merely inspired?

If the assignment of gender, case, and number to the Greek icon *Theos* were as easily made as our New Testament Greek instructor asserts, there would not have been centuries of Christological debates, with even today no agreement as to number: was Christ one with the Father as in one hypostasis before His birth as the man Jesus? Christian orthodoxy asserts that He was, but neither Christian Unitarians nor Judaism nor Islam agrees. Hence wars have been fought over the assignment of number to the allegedly masculine singular icon $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$, with all sides agreeing that the number should be one ... what's happening that linguistic agreement doesn't equate to human agreement? Where is the fault?

Northwest Coast formline art employs a grammar that is readable by the informed observer, but this "grammar" was lost when well-intended preachers and politicians attempted to scour the stain of paganism from Northwest Coast Native cultures. Recovery of formline's grammar began with Bill Reid's and Bill Holm's independent studies of early pieces, with each describing what the person observed. Hence, Bill Holm writes in his "Preface" to *Northwest Coast Indian Art* (University of Washington Press, 1965), "When I attempted to reconstruct the rules upon which this system of principles was based, however, it became apparent that, although my conclusions seemed logical on the basis of the material examined, there was no real documentation to substantiate them" (v), and "Ideally, a study of this sort should lean heavily on information from Indian artists trained in the tradition that fostered the art. Unfortunately, I was unable to locate a qualified informant from the area covered" (vii). And concerning the grammar of Koine Greek, the grammar rules for this language of the New Testament were reconstructed from careful examination of surviving texts in a manner analogous to how Bill Reid and Bill Holm "rediscovered" the grammar of formline art. Ideally, reconstruction of such rules should lean heavily on information supplied by speakers for whom Koine Greek was their first language, but such speakers ceased to exist long ago as even Koine Greek evolved with usage. Latin was the language of scholarship for a very long time. And those who have translated the original texts into other languages had to rediscover the grammar by careful analysis, assigning to both words and grammar meanings that stemmed from their mental paradigms.

The Roman Church had no great love affair with books, burning as many as it could so as to limit the spread of alleged heresies. Most Greek texts were burned. Very few survived other than in translation: it is estimated that the Latin Church burned as many as fifteen million documents, books, and codices from the 2nd through 15th Centuries. So it is from Arabic and Latin translations that most Koine Greek texts came to scholars in the 16th-Century—and as our first year Greek instructor will tell his or her students, *Latin often misleads a student if the student uses Latin genders to guess at Greek genders.*

Whereas the Greek Church retained the Septuagint as its working copy of the Old Testament and thus some continuity of language usage as the King James Version of the Bible slowed the "drift" of English usage until grammar could be taught in public schools, Doctor Johnson was correct when he wrote in the 18th-Century that trying to *fix* the language was as trying to enchain the wind: language use can only be held in place for as long as a generation lives.

English has combined both the dative case and the accusative case to form the objective case. For an English user, a noun in the Greek accusative case functions as the direct object of the verb. This noun will usually follow the verb. When it doesn't follow the verb, the syntax of the sentence (or of the clause) has been twisted to produce an effect ... the order in which an auditor encounters words inevitably produces a hierarchy of importance. To encounter a direct object before encountering the subject of a sentence

makes some sort of statement about the object having greater importance than the subject. To repeat a sentence or a clause is to emphasize the information conveyed by the sentence or clause. In inscribed communication (i.e., written texts) where the auditor can reread the linguistic icons used to convey the particular piece of knowledge, repetition either occurs from sloppy use of the language or from a special need to emphasize the piece of knowledge conveyed. Determining whether repetition is accidental or deliberate becomes a judgment call that must be made by the auditor.

A writer is perhaps more sensitive to how another writer used structure, form, and texture to convey information than is a non-writer, regardless of how knowledgeable the non-writer is as a translator. This is one reason why Pope's translation of Homer's poetry continues to be read. And "natural writers" are always few in every generation. Whereas university creative writing programs have existed for decades to "teach" students with a desire to write how to produce better texts, the nation is not today overrun with writers producing exceptional texts but rather with writers producing mediocre texts in which, despite technical perfection, the shallowness of the writer's character inhibits excellence.

The writers who have brought us the New Testament were not all natural writers, nor writers possessing technical excellence: Peter said of Paul, "There are some things in [Paul's epistles] that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures" (2 Pet 3:16). So before proceeding farther, let it here be acknowledged that ignorant and unstable disciples appearing as ministers of righteousness will twist Paul's epistles into instruments of their own destruction. Disciples are not to be carried away by these errors "of lawless people" (v. 17), and therein Peter discloses how Paul's epistles were then and now are being twisted into instruments of destruction.

If Peter had to warn "those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours [the Apostles]" (2 Pet 1:1) that the ignorant and unstable have twisted Paul's epistles into vehicles of lawlessness; and since John writes, "Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness" and "Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil" (1 John 3:4, 8), endtime disciples have sufficient assurances that among 1st-Century disciples of Jesus were those who taught that Christians did not have to keep the commandments of God. Jesus said that "many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will lead many astray" (Matt 24:5). He also said, "If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words" (John 5:46-47) ... Gentiles did not believe Moses or they would not have remained as Gentiles: their lack of circumcision was evidence of unbelief. Thus, Gentile converts were not in the habit of believing Moses prior to conversion.

Paul writes,

So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. (Rom 2:26-29)

If a Gentile convert still uncircumcised begins to keep the precepts of the law and has his uncircumcision counted as circumcision, will this Gentile convert not now cause the natural Israelite to be jealous? Of course he will. And Paul wrote, "So I ask, did [Israel] stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous" (Rom 11:11). Later in the passage, Paul adds, "Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an

apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them” (*vv.* 13–14).

It is not possible for a Gentile to make a Jew jealous by continuing to live as a Gentile. Only by a Gentile beginning to live as a Jew will a natural Israelite become jealous of the oracles of God that the convert, by his lack of circumcision, would seem to be polluting. And it is here where what Paul says to Peter at Antioch now makes sense:

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews [be Judaizers]?” (*Gal* 2:11–14)

The gospel that both Paul and Peter taught had uncircumcised Gentile converts living like Jews; i.e., according to the Law of Moses. The gospel taught at Antioch placed no importance on the circumcision of the flesh, but upon the circumcision of the heart, with the heart being cleansed by faith as the outward penis was cleansed by alcohol or wine. Therefore, to return importance to the flesh was to follow or teach a contrary and accused gospel to the one both Paul and Peter had been teaching; hence, Peter stood condemned for teaching one gospel but giving homage to another gospel when circumcised men came from Jerusalem.

It was easy for “converted” Greek philosophers to teach a gospel of Christ that had lawless Greek converts living as they had always lived. It was hard to teach Hellenists to keep the commandments of God. It was easy to teach Greeks to accept Jesus as their personal savior; it was hard to teach these same converts to walk as Jesus walked. The easy work was to get Greeks into services [even this was not all that easy], especially when miracles were involved. The hard work was to get them to quit living as Greeks and start living as Jews. And the same can be said about Jewish converts: it was easy to get them to accept Jesus as the son of David, but it was hard to get them to accept circumcision of the heart as “genuine” circumcision. Too much could be faked too easily, whereas when an adult man was committed enough to obeying God that he would undergo physical circumcision, there was not doubt about his sincerity.

Paul’s accused and doubly accused gospel placed importance on the flesh. And the movement away from importance being placed on the flesh left Greek converts subject to Gnostic arguments that manifested themselves in letters to Paul in which Greek converts wrote, “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman” (*1 Cor* 7:1). But Paul, being tactful, wrote back: “But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband” (*v.* 2). So Paul did not agree with the Gnostic converts who saw all things pertaining to the flesh as corrupt and evil. What Paul realized was that buried within Gnosticism is the teaching that human beings possess immortal souls received by men having their way with maids. And Paul’s gospel held that “the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (*Rom* 6:23). Paul’s gospel asserted that eternal life came in no other way than as a gift from God; hence, no Gnostic built on the foundation Paul laid (*1 Cor* 3:10–11).

Throughout Paul’s ministry he fought with the Circumcision Faction that wanted Gentile converts to be outwardly circumcised as a testament to their belief. After all, the Circumcision Faction would seem to have had Scripture on its side. Moses recorded,

And the Lord [*YHWH*] said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the statute of the Passover: no foreigner shall eat of it If a stranger shall sojourn with you

and would keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised. Then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it. There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you.” (Ex 12:43, 48–49)

The prophet Ezekiel quotes the Lord,

And say to the rebellious house, to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: O house of Israel, enough of all your abominations, in admitting foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, to be in my sanctuary, profaning my temple, when you offer to me my food, the fat and the blood.

Thus says the Lord God: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary. (Ezek 44:6–7, 9)

Greek converts were certainly foreigners, but the Circumcision Faction didn't understand “circumcision,” or what circumcision represented; so the Circumcision Faction would have had Gentile converts strip off the mantle of Christ's righteousness to cover themselves with their own obedience, for circumcision causes a descendant of Abraham to appear before the Lord naked except for the descendant's obedience to God: the covenant the Lord made with Abraham that was ratified by circumcision called for Abraham to walk upright before the Lord (Gen 17:1) as a biped visibly walks upright and doesn't shamle along as a beast. And Paul reminded the converts at Rome that there is none righteous, that all have turned aside from the way of righteousness (3:10–12). No one whose paternity descends from the first Adam can, until clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49), always outwardly walk upright before God. The man Jesus of Nazareth's father was not the first Adam, but the *Logos* (John 1:14) who was *Theos* [θεός] and who was in the beginning with τὸν θεόν [*the Theon*] (vv. 1–2). This Jesus of Nazareth became the firstborn son of the Father when the divine breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] descended as a dove to light and remain on Jesus, thereby fulfilling all righteousness (Matt 3:15–17). Thus, all disciples need the mantle of Christ's righteousness, which is spiritual birth received from the Father and the covering of grace, with grace being the garment of Christ.

Circumcision negates grace; however, immediately after the Jerusalem Conference in which the issue really was stumbling blocks, not the Law of Moses, Paul has Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3) so that Timothy's uncircumcision would not become a stumbling block to the conversion of Jews (Rom 14:13). Paul, who wrote that circumcision is a matter of the heart and not of the flesh, subjected both his and Timothy's freedom under grace to the weakness of faith of Jewish converts and to the expectations that non-convert Jews had of all who enter a synagogue.

Whereas Paul was continually at war with the Circumcision Faction and its accused gospel about the importance of the flesh, of genealogy, of the temple, and of civil self-determination, questions of Christology had not yet emerged from the theological junk infiltrating the early Church. But that was soon to change.

In an attack against Sabellian heretics, Epiphanius references a *Gospel of the Egyptians*. Was this destroyed Gospel the work of the Gnostic philosopher Basildes who taught in Alexandria in the 2nd-Century and claimed to have a secret tradition transmitted to him by Peter, a claim that is akin to Justin Martyr claiming the Apostle John was a contemporary. According to Eusebius, all copies of Basildes' widely known *Interpretation of the Gospels* were burned by order of the Church, and the burning of his

books in the 2nd-Century would seem to deny validity to Basildes' claim of receiving a secret tradition transmitted directly from Peter¹.

The Gospel of John was allegedly written as a formal rebuttal against Kerinthus, an actual contemporary of the Apostle and a circumcised Egyptian who taught that the universe was created by angels and the message delivered to Moses was given by angels, a teaching that would seem to be supported by Hebrews 2:1–2, Acts 7:38, and Exodus 3:2, a passage in which *Elohim* could be falsely construed to be angels. Therefore, John wants to make one point absolutely clear: the man Jesus of Nazareth was a deity before His human birth; was the God of Scripture; and returned to being with the Father when He returned to heaven. John does not make any claim about shapeshifting, or changing forms/manifestations, or about God being triune in nature.

Writing a quarter of a century after Paul wrote his prison epistles, John summed up Paul's confrontations with the Circumcision Faction with the words of Jesus: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit" (John 3:5–6). Being born of water is not baptism, but being born of the water of a womb as a flesh and blood human being, a descendant of the first Adam. Being born of spirit is receiving the Holy Spirit and a second life within the tent of flesh of the old creature or old man. This second life is like the "life" the man Jesus received when the Holy Spirit descended upon Him as a dove; so this second life is received from the Father, who by giving a person this spiritual life has raised the person from the dead (John 5:21). It remains for the glorified Jesus to also give the person life by the mortal flesh putting on immortality when judgments are revealed. Hence, a disciple is a descendant of the second Adam, who received the *breath* of spiritual life from the Father as the first Adam received the breath of physical life from *Elohim* [singular in usage].

Following Paul's separation of Jesus as Lord from God the Father, John goes after Kerinthus' gospel by beginning his gospel with, Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος [*In (the) beginning was the Logos*] (1:1), an independent clause that will stand by itself as a thought — the verb "ἦν" is a transitive verb, meaning that it would ordinarily require a direct object. The noun "ἀρχῇ" is not in accusative case nor carries the nominative case ending and as such cannot be the direct object of the verb. That "ἦν" is a transitive verb is seen in the clause, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος [*and Theos was the Logos*, or in normal English syntax, *the Logos was Theos*] (1:1), where the verb "ἦν" transfers identity from "the Logos" to "Theos," thereby causing "Theos" to retain its nominative case ending as a masculine singular noun. So John's Gospel begins with language that readily makes sense and makes the indisputable claim that *the Logos* was God, sharing even the same definite article, "ὁ," in the third clause of the sentence.

If *the Logos* was God [θεὸς] and was the creator of all that has been made, then *this one* [οὗτος] was the one whose feet Abraham washed, and who wrestled with Jacob, and who Moses, Aaron, and the seventy elders saw on Mount Sinai. And *this one* was in the beginning with τὸν θεόν, thereby delivering a hard blow to the idol of monotheism as understood by spiritually lifeless Judaism.

So, if John's purpose was—and it apparently was—to refute Kerinthus' teaching about creating angels, the refuting of the Egyptian's teaching begins with John's first sentence, a sentence that has caused the Christian Church as much difficulty as Paul's epistles have collectively caused; for the second clause of his initial sentence reads, καὶ ὁ

¹ Peter would have died before Basildes was born or at best when Basildes was a very small infant as Justin Martyr was reportedly born in the year when John is assumed to have died. This would be akin to someone of the post WWII baby boom claiming President Roosevelt as a contemporary.

λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν [and the Logos was with the God] (1:1) ... the Logos who was God was also with the God—

How much attention should a disciple pay to definite articles? Brits and by extension Canadians have, over the past fifty years, developed the habit of saying, *I'm going to hospital*, or *We're taking him to hospital*, whereas an American will still use the definite article, "the hospital": *We're taking him to the hospital*. When I have asked a Brit why he or she omits the definite article, so far I have only received the reply that the speaker did not omit the article, but said *the hospital*. This is simply not true. The definite article was omitted even if the speaker thought he or she was saying it.

For an American, the difference between "God" and "the God" is enormous; so for translators to omit the definite article in the second clause of John's initial sentence changes meanings in an almost unimaginable way. If John's sentence were translated, "In (the) beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with the God, and the Logos was God," the sentence would be accurately translated and would be completely translated, and the presence of two entities would be linguistically sound. One entity would be "the" God, and one entity would also be God. And this is the point of John repeating himself: οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν [*This one was in (the) beginning with the God*] (1:2).

The article "the" is of such importance to English speakers that it must be added to "beginning" before the concept becomes mentally complete: "in beginning" just doesn't work whereas "in the beginning" works fine. "God" is and isn't "the God," with whether He is or isn't depending upon the context in which the icon appears.

The English language quit using case endings nearly a millennium ago, thanks to the three centuries long overlay of Norman French over both Old English and Old Norse then in use on the island when William the Bastard defeated Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings. Nouns lost their suffixes as illiterate Old English speakers and Old Norse speakers orally communicated with each other in word roots (Old English was West Germanic and Old Norse was North Germanic so both used the same roots but differing case endings and pronouns). Thus, when Henry V ordered that his victory at Agincourt be recorded in English rather than in French, the inscribed English language used many Latinate words but did not use many Germanic case endings, depending instead upon sentence position to determine word usage and case.

The question must be asked: How reliable was the recovery of grammar rules for Koine Greek? The answer is, reasonably reliable, but our instructor teaching New Testament Greek in an American seminary would probably quibble with the qualifier "reasonably," insisting instead that all is known about how the language is used—and then insist that God is triune in nature, consisting of three entities forming one hypostasis, with this hypostasis being linguistically masculine singular. And therein lays the problem that caused Christology to dominate theological discussions throughout the 4th and 5th Centuries: the English word "God," like the Koine Greek word θεός, is not a personal name, but a descriptive referent for the house of the deity that is one in unity. This *house* is one in singularity as the tent of flesh in which the born of spirit disciple dwells is one in singularity ... in John's initial sentence, the second clause, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, has a direct object for the transitive verb "ἦν," with this direct object being, "τὸν θεόν," the accusative case ending (seen in the article "τὸν") for the masculine singular noun "θεός." Yet the structure of the sentence, followed by a repetitive sentence, linguistically precludes "ὁ λόγος" from having as its direct object "τὸν θεόν." And if "τὸν θεόν" cannot structurally be the direct object of "ὁ λόγος" which has as its object the masculine singular (nominative case) noun "θεός," then John's usage of the language doesn't easily lend itself to simplistic explication.

John's point is that Jesus was God before He entered His creation as His only Son (John 3:16), and that Jesus asked the Father to return to Him the glory He had along

with the Father before the world was (John 17:5). The structure of John's initial sentence makes θεός and θεόν separate entities, both God, both textually present throughout John's Gospel, but with θεός—and here the noun is used as a name to distinguish it from the direct object of the second clause, τὸν θεόν—being the One who entered His creation as His only Son, the man Jesus of Nazareth. And in Christian orthodoxy recognizing that the Father and the Son formed one hypostasis, these lawless theologians almost arrived where they needed to be: instead of God being one hypostasis, it is one house as Israel is one house.

With the appropriate definite article, *Theon* is the genitive plural of *Theos*, as *Theos*, itself, in its unaccented form changes gender.

Returning to “God” being the identifier for the house of the deity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as “Chanel” is the identifier for the House of Chanel, the fashion house that carries on the concepts of the famed designer, Coco Chanel, Paul writes, “For we know that if the tent, which is our earthly house, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven” (2 Cor 5:1). This “house—οἰκία” is “a building from God—οἰκοδομὴν ἐκ θεοῦ,” and this building from God is the house to which Jesus has gone ahead to prepare a room or a staying [μοναὶ] (John 14:2) for each disciple; therefore, when the mortal flesh puts on immortality, a disciple has a room or a staying in the house of the Father. But meanwhile, within the disciple's earthly house [ἐπίγειος οἰκία] dwells the new creature born of spirit [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] as well as Christ Jesus in the form of the spirit or breath of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ] and the crucified old man or the former nature of the person. So within the disciple's fleshly body are three breaths or spirits, with “spirit” being from Norman French, from Latin *spiritus*, the direct translation of the Greek icon πνευμα, meaning “breath,” or “wind,” or any form of moving air: a force invisible to the eye as air is invisible. These three breaths are the natural breath of the person, “*psuche*,” plus the spiritual “breaths” of the Father and the Son, both of which are holy breaths, and both of which are separate breaths (cf. Rom 8:9, 11).

And the problem of linguistic singleness has just been transferred from deity to the breaths of the Father and the Son ... when a prisoner in Rome, Paul wrote,

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the [oneness of the spirit—ἐνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος] in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. (Eph 4:1-7)

The referent of the expression, “one Lord—εἷς κύριος,” would be, from the sentence construction, an entity separate from the “one God and Father of all—εἷς θεός καὶ πατήρ πάντων,” with both being linguistically masculine singular entities. As there was one hope and one calling, there is one Lord and one God and Father—and that one Lord, when resurrected from death (Rom 10:9), said He was going to the one Father and God of Him and of His brothers [πορεύου δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ εἰπὲ αὐτοῖς, Ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ θεόν μου καὶ θεὸν ὑμῶν] (John 20:17).

The requirement of every disciple is to profess with the mouth that Jesus is Lord and to believe in the heart that God raised Jesus from the dead. John, more so than the other gospel writers, wanted to stress the divinity of *the Logos* who entered His creation to be

born as the man Jesus of Nazareth, and whether New Testament Greek instructors like it or not, John, in his construction of his first two sentences of his gospel, separates “the one Lord” from “the one God and Father of all.” The repetition was for effect in somewhat the same way an English speaker would say, *I don't want no potatoes, for the Logos was in the beginning; this one was in the beginning with the God.*

The Logos is I Am, as in “He existed in the beginning, He was God, and He was with the God.” He is ever-present, always, the repetition used for emphasis as John used repetition for emphasis; John wrote to instruct, not to impress linguists by his enlightened use of the language.

Trinitarians took the structural separateness that prevents one linguistic masculine singular entity from being another masculine singular entity, and assumed that one entity had to be the other entity if the monotheism of Judaism was to have any bearing on Christian dogma. This assumption was false, and was a tradition given to a lawless Church so that it could not have life as God gave to lawless ancient Israel statutes and rules by which this nation could not have life (Ezek 20:25-26); for the person who assigns personhood to the “breath” of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] commits blasphemy against the Father and the Son. Most likely this person will also commit blasphemy against the empowering breath of God when the person is liberated from indwelling sin and death.

2.

On Thursday of the second full week in January 2002, about 10:12 CST, as I was pulling into the parking lot of Southeastern Illinois College where I was to teach a class, I heard the words, “It’s time to reread prophecy,” within my mind as clearly as if the words were spoken by a person next to me. But these words were not heard as if they came from a passing voice. They formed a thought within my mind that seemed to have substance, a thought like the one experienced when I was initially drafted into the Body of Christ thirty years earlier.

I didn't set out to be part of the Body of Christ; I grew up believing church attendance was a sign of a serious character defect. But I was drafted into the Body as if being drafted into military service.

I'm named for my dad, who died when I was eleven. Massive heart attack. He was drafted into the Army in that first lottery, spring 1941; he's buried in Portland's Willamette National Cemetery, five rows down (west) of the flagpole. My brother, Dr. Kenneth Kizer, while Undersecretary of Health for Veteran Affairs, arranged for a plaque that acknowledges Dad's interment in the cemetery.

I was in fifth grade when Dad died. As the oldest of five siblings, I was suddenly thrust into responsibilities that prevented me from truly rebelling against the status quo. I never drank, partied, took drugs, or had extramarital affairs. I would have been, to my San Francisco peers, a boring fellow. My teenage and young adult rebellion was primarily limited to poaching deer; I looked “acceptable” to the surrounding world. There wasn't, when I reached my majority, an obvious need in my life (or so I thought) for God or Christ or religion.

Mom remarried when I was thirteen, married Lyle Squier, a Seventh Day Adventist with a tenth-grade education, really a nice fellow whom neither I nor my siblings appreciated while we lived together. There are reasons why Dr. Laura tells her radio callers not to marry unless values are shared. Mom and Lyle fought about everything, beginning with what foods would be brought into the house. Pork was suddenly taboo. There was no more Saturday grocery shopping, or fishing or hunting, or doing much of anything. And I set out to prove Lyle and the Seventh Day Adventists were wrong about the Sabbath. After all, the whole world, except for the Adventists, couldn't be wrong. I had a good mind. I could read as well as most people, could reason intelligently, could

recognize logical inconsistencies. There seemed no reason why I couldn't prove Lyle was an uneducated hick, the opinion I then held about my stepfather.

After studying everything I could, after reading the Bible fairly critically, I concluded that the whole world could be wrong. That was disillusioning. If a person were to believe in God (I didn't want to), the Law remained in effect. Christians were no longer under the Law, for the Law was now inside the person, written on hearts and minds. Murder committed with the hand had become anger or hate committed with the mind. Adultery committed with the body had become lust committed with the mind. The Sabbath wasn't changed to another day, but went from what the body did on the seventh day to what the mind thought. What had been outside had relocated itself to inside the person. Luckily for me, or so I thought at the time, I was strong enough to resist the lure of myths and historical nonsense. So I set what I had learned on a mental backburner, and I went about my business, ignoring the Sabbath, God, and the need for personal salvation. Only now, I could figuratively shoot down arguments of anyone who claimed the Sabbath had been changed to Sunday by Christ's resurrection, and I wasn't above doing so.

Paul writes, "Now these things [Israel's rebellion in the wilderness] took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did" (1 Cor 10:6), and "Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom of the end of the ages has come" (v. 11) ... if Israel's rebellion against God took place as an example that *Christians* might not desire evil, what happens if *Christians* desire to practice evil? What if Christians, in believing lawless teachers who have done mighty works in the name of Jesus (Matt 7:21–23), spurn practicing righteousness even though sin has no dominion over them? Will Israel in the wilderness not then serve as a shadow or type of these Christians rather than as merely an example?

In its rebellion against God, Israel attempted to enter into God's rest on the following day (*cf.* Num 14:40–41; Ps 95:10–11; Heb 3:16–4:11). In the Christian Church's rebellion against God, Christians attempt to enter into God's rest on the following day ... will these unbelieving Christians be any more successful than was natural Israel?

Did Israel in the wilderness desire to practice evil? Did the nation that saw Pharaoh's army drowned in the Sea of Reeds knowingly choose not to believe God? Did this nation of 600,000 adult men, hardened to the rigors of physical exertion through a lifetime of toil to Egyptian overlords, fear to believe God—or did they even think such thoughts? Were their minds instead preoccupied with the immediacy at hand, this immediacy being the need to arrive somewhere and get settled back into a routine, the need for some other food beside manna, the need for a house rather than a tent, the need to work, earn money, increase flocks and grow crops? Did any Israelite other than Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb see anything wrong with returning to Egypt, a devastated nation without an army, without a functioning infrastructure, but still with flood-irrigated fields and the blessing of the Nile River? Was it not more reasonable to turn back and enslave Egyptians who had previously enslaved Israel than to continue on and face giants?

Do Christians desire to practice evil when they, because of unbelief, refuse to enter into God's presence when the promise of entering stands as ancient Israel refused to enter into God's rest when the twelve spies returned? Or are Christians even aware of their rebellion against God? And whether Christians desire or do not desire to practice evil, does not Israel's rebellion in the wilderness of Paran form the model or type of the Church's rebellion against God, a rebellion of unbelief that becomes disobedience (Heb 3:19; 4:6) through spurning the Sabbath commandment?

After God had pronounced a death sentence on Israel because of its unbelief, the nation acknowledged its sin and attempted to enter God's rest on the following day. For a Christian, attempting to enter God's rest on the following day is Sunday observance.

For ancient Israel, was not attempting to enter God's rest on the following day disobedience, or rebellion against God? It was, wasn't it? And again—this cannot be emphasized too strongly—to enter God's rest is to enter into His presence, for the “eyes of [YHWH Israel's *Elohim*] were always upon [the Promise Land], from the beginning of the year to the end of the year” (Deut 11:12) as a type of a disciple entering into God's presence through the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ.

As entering into the presence of a human king comes by permission, the right of access into God's house and His courts was extended to the high priest Joshua, high priest under Zerubbabel and a type of one who serves under Christ², on the condition that Joshua “walk in [the Lord of hosts'] ways and keep [His] charge” (Zech 3:7). This conditional right of access was given by permission and was only extended to Joshua and his friends. The writer of Hebrews says, “For if Joshua [the servant of Moses] had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whosoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his” (4:8–10) on the seventh day (*v.* 4).

In the wilderness of Paran, repentance did Israel no good (Deut 1:34–36, 41–43). And what's seen is there comes a day when no more rebellion will be tolerated (2 Thess 2:3, 11–12); when repentance will not be accepted; when Christians are held fully accountable for their transgressions of the laws of God.

Israel serves as an example for Christians: in the wilderness of Paran, God would no longer accept Israel's repentance. And later, when the children of the nation that left Egypt profaned God's Sabbath, God “gave them statutes that were not good and rules by which they could not have life, and [He] defiled them through their very gifts in their offering up all their firstborn, that [He] might devastate them” (Ezek 20:25–26). ... Think about what the prophet Ezekiel records! After decades of rebellion, God gave to Israel statutes and rules by which the nation could not have life. These Israelites, now believing they are serving God in pure religion (because God has given them these statutes), caused their firstborns to pass through fire, a practice by which Israel's 8th-Century BCE migrations can be traced. It never dawned on these Israelites that they should be appalled by the heinousness of what they were doing. Rather, they remained more faithful in observing these statutes by which they could not have life than they ever were in keeping the commandments Moses gave them, commandments by which they would live.

Why would God do that? Why would He give Israel statutes and rules that caused Israel to continue its heinous practice of sacrificing its firstborns? Why would a loving God, who is the same today as yesterday, cause Israel to burn its firstborns by passing them through fires dedicated to Molech? That is certainly not the concept of God taught within Christian orthodoxy, which holds that the same deity who gave to lawless Israel statutes by which Israel could not have life is the loving God who does not ask Christians to keep His commandments, the ones He gave from atop Mount Sinai.

If what Christian orthodoxy teaches were true, God is a grievous respecter of persons, hating His lawless firstborn son (Ex 4:22) while loving equally lawless sons of God covered by grace.

The answer most likely received to the question of why would God give Israel statutes by which the nation could not live yet not give to equally lawless Christendom similar

² Today Christ Jesus is Israel's high priest, but after the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:30), Christ will no longer bear the sins of Israel, a nation then liberated from bondage to sin and death—and a nation then delivered into the hand of the man of perdition for the destruction of the flesh. And another will serve as high priest as Christ becomes the reality of Zerubbabel, whose hand will finish the construction of the heavenly temple. The one who will serve as high priest has filthy garments, a statement that does not pertain to Christ Jesus.

statutes is that *it's a matter of Election*; for Paul writes, “And not only so, but also Rebecca had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of his call—she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ As it is written, ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated’” (Rom 9:10–13).

If Jacob is loved, then would not Jacob as Israel (*one who prevails with God*) be the Elect? Esau is certainly not the Elect. And if the Christian Church is now the Elect rather than natural Israel, then is not the Church Israel? There really can be no other conclusion.

But there is a difficulty for Paul identifies disciples as Isaac (Gal 4:21–31), and compares natural Israel to Hagar, the bondwoman who bore Abraham a son by the natural process of a man having his way with a maid. Isaac is the son of promise, the son born to Abraham that does not come by natural means but by the supernatural intervention of God. And if disciples are Isaac, then in the womb of Isaac (Rebecca’s womb is Isaac’s womb) are at this time both Esau and Jacob; so within Christendom are those disciples who, though covered by grace so that no sin is imputed to them, are today hated by God as Esau was hated while still in the womb. And within this same womb are disciples who, though deceitful, are loved by God. Hence, within Christendom are the many that have been called by the Father and the Son, but of this many few will be chosen (Matt 22:14). Few will be the Elect.

The Elect are, therefore, a subset of Christendom; they are that portion loved by God, the portion that represents Jacob. Isaac does not replace Ishmael as the natural son of Abraham, but rather, from Isaac comes two sons of promise (Gen 25:21), one hated, one loved, whereas from Ishmael would come a great nation of twelve princes (Gen 17:20). The covenant God made with Abraham was “established” through Isaac, not Ishmael, with God naming Isaac a year before his birth (Gen 17:21). And because Isaac does not replace Ishmael as the natural son of Abraham, the Christian Church cannot replace natural Israel as the natural firstborn son of the *Theos* of Abraham, the *Theos* of Isaac, and the *Theos* of Jacob (Matt 22:32). The Christian Church can only be the firstfruits of the Father, with Christ Jesus as the glorified First of the firstfruits and Head of the Church.

Jacob is not renamed Israel until after he leaves the Promised Land and journeys into the land that will be later named Assyria, a land that typological represents “death” as Egypt represents “sin,” and then returns to wrestle with God and “prevails” by living to tell of having wrestled with God.

The difference between Esau and Jacob isn’t a matter of righteousness, but a matter of valuing the blessings of the covenant enough to strive to obtain these blessings. Initially Jacob strives deceitfully so he has to wrestle with God, be maimed, but he hung on until he legitimately receives the blessing as one who has striven with God and with men and has prevailed (Gen 32:28).

Esau was clothed with his own hair covering so even through he wore clothing he was naturally clothed as a beast is. Jacob had no covering but that which he put on daily as disciples put on the garment of Christ’s righteousness daily. Although both a spiritual Esau and a spiritual Jacob are now clothed in grace, when this mantle of Christ’s righteousness is removed—removed when the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:30)—Esau will not value his birthright enough to further clothe himself in obedience to God, but will, instead, rely upon his natural hair coat to conceal his nakedness. And he will be as a beast [i.e., as spiritual livestock] to God, who molds from the same lump of clay vessels for honorable use and vessels for dishonorable usage, with these latter vessels being vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, endured for a season with much patience (Rom 9:21-23). They are to be broken when the temple of God is dedicated

upon Christ's return; they are as the 22,000 bulls and 120,000 sheep sacrificed were when Solomon dedicated the first temple, the earthly temple that formed the shadow of the heavenly temple of God.

3.

If God, to cause Israel to return to Him, gave Israel statutes and rules that would cause them to burn their firstborns—a practice Israel “borrowed” from their Canaanite neighbors and a practice against which Moses warned (Deut 18:10) but apparently a practice which God commanded them to continue once they engaged in the practice—then this God who is the same today as He was yesterday will also give spiritually circumcised Israel rules that come from the nation's traditional transgressions of the law so that this latter Israel cannot have life, but will see its firstborns perish in fire.

John writes,

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. ... No one who abides in [Christ] keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen [Christ] or known [Christ]. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as [Christ] 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 Man 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. (1 John 3:4, 6–10)

The *Christian* who practices sinning is no longer of Christ but of the devil, with sinning being the means by which it becomes apparent for all to see who are the sons of God and who are the sons of the devil, as Pharisees were sons of the devil (John 8:44), which doesn't mean that Satan physically sired them but that their mindsets come from the Adversary. So, yes, Christians who practice sinning are as the Jews were who sought Jesus' life: there is no truth in these Christians because there is no truth in their father, the devil. Therefore, as God gave to the children of Israel that rejected His statutes and profaned His Sabbaths (Ezek 20:24) statutes and rules by which this Israel could not have life but statutes that caused Israel to celebrate the fiery deaths of their firstborns, God gave to Christians that rejected His statutes and profaned His Sabbaths traditions by which these sons of God could not have life, traditions that caused early Christians to celebrate their liberty from the Judaizers [Ἰουδαϊζειν or Ἰουδαϊζω — Gal 2:14, and in the Septuagint, Ester 8:17], so-called heretics that would have disciples walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6). Understand, the Circumcision Faction was included among those whom later lawless disciples identified as Judaizers, but this is akin to Osama bin Laden identifying all Americans as infidels thereby making no distinction between Roman Catholics, Jehovah Witnesses, Southern Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, and the Sabbatarian Churches of God. Certainly the faith of Justin Martyr was as far from the faith of the Apostle John as Roman Catholic dogma is from what I write, but to one outside of Christianity such as bin Laden, the distinctions are minor and of no consequence. Likewise, to lawless Christians of the 4th-Century CE, the distinction between those who taught disciples to live by the precepts of the law by faith were minor; and as is usually the case, the worse traits or teachings of a few were ascribed to all “Judaizers.”

The Apostle Peter was a Judaizer, for he taught Gentile converts to live as Jews (again, Gal 2:14). So did John, and so did Paul, but what hasn't been understood is that

the one who is to live as a Jew is the inner new creature, circumcised of heart by spirit, and this inner new creature is to bring the tent of flesh in which this son of God lives into subjection to the law of God that is now in the mind and heart of the disciple. When this inner new creature successfully brings the tent of flesh in which this son of God dwells into subjection to the laws of God, the tent of flesh will live as an observant Jew, will live as Jesus lived, but will or will not be outwardly circumcised, which is of the tent of flesh and not of the new creature. Outward circumcision can be likened to modifying the house in which a person lives: the modification doesn't affect the righteousness of the resident of the house.

God will deliver Christians who practice sinning and who do not love their brother to their spiritual father for the destruction of their flesh as Paul commanded the saints at Corinth to deliver the one who was with his father's wife to Satan (1 Cor 5:5). And God did deliver the Christian Church into the hand of Satan through those traditions that prevent Christians from having life, with the foremost tradition being the day of the week on which these lawless Christians attempt to enter into God's presence. He also physically delivered the Church to the prince of this world as He delivered the southern kingdom of Israel to Nebuchadnezzar, the physical king of Babylon, when Emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicea and approximately 300 of 1800 bishops dutifully appeared before this Roman emperor.

As God liberated Israel, His firstborn son (Ex 4:22), from physical bondage to a human king at the first Passover, God will liberate Israel, still His firstborn son but now a nation circumcised of heart, from bondage to sin and death at the second Passover, with this paschal Lamb sacrificed at Calvary ... since Calvary, Israel entered one long spiritual night with its midnight hour still not upon the holy nation of God (1 Pet 2:9); for as the lives of Egyptians were given as ransom for Israel in the time of Moses (Isa 43:3), the lives of men will again be given for the ransom of Israel (*v.* 4) when death angels pass over the land, slaying all firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God. But unfortunately, once liberated from bondage to indwelling sin and death through being filled with the Holy Spirit or empowered by the Holy Spirit and thus clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49), most Christians will return to sin as Satan's willing servants. So the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years of tribulation are about the liberation of Israel, the rebellion of Israel, and the delivery by God of the Christian Church to Satan for the destruction of the flesh as Christ, the Shepherd, was struck (Zech 13:7; Matt 26:31); for the Christian who "finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for [Christ's] sake will find it" (Matt 10:39) when the Lord of hosts delivers saints into the hand of the man of perdition for the destruction of the flesh so that the spirit might be saved when judgments are revealed (*cf.* Zech 13:8; 2 Thess 2:3–12). Christians who does not love the truth enough to physically die for it and thus be saved will rebel against God to save their fleshly lives.

The Christian Church as perceived by the world doesn't replace Israel as the holy nation of God, but—and here is the caveat—those Christians who are so-called Judaizing heretics keeping the commandments of God by faith and not outwardly as a matter of circumcision are all of the Christian Church that is today of God. They are the oil and wine Sin is not to harm (Rev 6:6). Nevertheless, God will liberate all of the Church from bondage to sin and death so that the thoughts and desires of all who profess to be disciples of Christ can be clearly seen through the acts of the flesh.

But to those so-called endtime Judaizing heretics who are of faith, who are firmly attached to the Root of Righteous, God will graft in the broken off natural branches of Israel throughout the first 1260 days of the Tribulation. Israel will, during the first half of the Tribulation, consist of both physically circumcised and uncircumcised disciples who keep the commandments of God by faith.

The writer of Hebrews says, “Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us [those who teach] fear lest any of you [the ones being taught] should seem to have failed to reach it [His rest]. For good news came to us just as to them [those who taught ancient Israel], but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest” (4:1–3) ... the good news of salvation did not benefit the teachers of natural Israel who were like Nicodemus, unable to understand an earthly example of what it means to be born of spirit (John 3:10–12), because these teachers of natural Israel *were not united by faith with those who listened*. And why were they not united in faith? Because though they had a law that would have led to righteousness (Rom 9:31) if pursued by faith rather than through the works of hands (*v.* 32), Israel never pursued this law by faith for Israel believed that outward circumcision alone was enough to make a person an Israelite and the loved son of God, just as lawless disciples in the early Church believed that all Judaizers taught Gentile disciples to circumcise themselves, thereby making outward circumcision some form of magical mutilation by which salvation comes to the person. Apparently, because too few disciples understood what Paul taught about being born of spirit (and what Jesus taught before Paul’s conversion), both Jewish and Gentile converts attached importance to the mutilation of the flesh. Yet when the lawyer came to Jesus to ask what he must do to inherit eternal life and Jesus asked the lawyer how he read the law (Luke 10:25–26), the lawyer answered correctly: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and will all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself” (*v.* 27). Jesus told the lawyer, “You have answered correctly; do this, and you shall live” (*v.* 28). So Israel should have known that righteousness could not be obtained through the works of their hands, but obtained by faith that would have the nation loving God with heart and mind, with the outward display of this love manifest through keeping the precepts of the law.

The “rest” which the nation that left Egypt could not enter (Ps 95:10–11) was the Promised Land, Judea, the land upon which the eyes of God were always set. Thus, except for Joshua and Caleb, the nation that left Egypt could not enter into God’s presence although Moses entered into His presence (Ex 33:14). But even Moses could not look upon the face of God and live, for Moses’ sins caused God to hid His face from Moses (Deut 32:19–20) ... the concept of sin being cause for an immediately executed death sentence is alien to Christians, who, because of the mantle of Christ’s righteousness that covers disciples, are not suddenly struck dead for wrongdoing—and because the mantle of grace delays execution of any death sentence, God gets to see what is inside a disciple’s heart by how the disciple responds after transgressing the law. Does the disciple regret the transgression, repent from wrongdoing, and strive to not again fail to measure up to the expectations of the household of God? Or does the disciple make light of the transgression, blowing it off as *no big deal* for the disciple is covered by grace? Again, within the womb of Isaac are two sons of promise, a spiritual Esau and a spiritual Jacob. The elder, the one who relaxes a commandment of God, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven and will serve his younger brother, who wrestles with God and prevails, wrestles by striving to keep the commandments in a world consigned to disobedience.

Traditionally, the Sabbath has been the primary shopping day of the week. When transportation was more difficult and more dear in the early decades of the 20th-Century, families went to town to do the majority of their shopping on the Sabbath. For many families in rural America, the weekly shopping trip was the focal point of farm existence, especially for the younger generation that fled farms as soon as they could. But in the post WWII boom, transportation became cheap and reliable. Stores obliged by staying open later in the evenings, then opening on Sunday. The convenience store *7-Eleven* was

an innovator, staying open seven days a week until 11:00 pm. However, within a decade or so, major chain stores were open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Shopping occurred at the convenience of the customer, but as U.S. gasoline prices rise to European levels, the trend will likely reverse itself, with fewer and fewer trips made by consumers to brick-and-mortar stores, thereby causing these stores to scale back hours and days when they are open. It should, then, surprise no one when the Sabbath is again the primary shopping day for Americans who profess to be Christians and as such the temple of God.

Christ cleansed the temple at the beginning of His ministry and at the end of His earthly ministry. He will cleanse the temple at the beginning of His endtime ministry, then again three years later when the lives of men are twice given as first ransom for Israel as lives of Egyptians were given for the ransom of His firstborn natural son and then as ransom for the third part of humankind (Zech 13:9) that will be born of spirit when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28). And from what does He cleanse the temple? From buying and selling in the presence of God; from making the Sabbath the busy shopping day of the week.

When the twelve spies returned from the Promised Land, Israel rebelled against God and would not enter into His rest when told to go because of unbelief. Likewise, the Christian Church, because of its unbelief, has rebelled against God, and attempts to enter into God's presence on the following day ... when manna was given (Jesus identifies Himself as the true Bread that has come down from heaven), God said, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily" (Ex 16:4-5). The giving of manna was, then, not just the means of feeding Israel in the wilderness, but a test of Israel to see whether Israel would walk in God's law or not.

But the law was not yet given. How can Israel be tested on something that has not yet been given? And the answer is by whether Israel would rest on the seventh day.

The endtime Christian Church has not yet been liberated from indwelling sin and death and thus clothed with power from on high, the spiritual equivalent to the period between the passing of the death angel over Egypt through the giving of the law; yet the Church is being today tested by whether it will enter into God's presence on the seventh day, the Sabbath. And what is seen is the wholesale failing of this test. The Christian Church, to be included in endtime Israel, must do much better when it is liberated from sin and death or the Church will go en masse into the lake of fire as the reality of ancient Israel passing its firstborns through fire.

When some of Israel went out to gather manna on the Sabbath (Ex 16:27), God did not order that those found gathering manna to be stoned—

1. Stoning was the prescribed penalty for breaking the commandments written on two tablets of stone: the broken tablets figuratively and literally killed the person breaking the commandments.
2. The law had not yet been given either orally or on two tablets of stone when those found gathering were rebuked by God.

Yet after the Law was given, the man found gathering sticks on the Sabbath was stoned on apparently the same day as when he was put into custody (Num 15:32-36).

Today, in the last of this pre-liberation era (in the last little while before death angels will again pass over all the land), disciples are not condemned to immediate death for breaking the Sabbath even though they have failed the test placed before them, failed because of unbelief. They are as the Israelites were who went out to gather manna on the seventh day (they do their heavy shopping on the seventh day) and God said of those

ancient Israelites who gathered on the seventh day, “How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? See! The Lord [YHWH] has given you the Sabbath; therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place; let no one go out of his place on the seventh day” (Ex 16:28–29).

The man Jesus of Nazareth said He was the true bread that has come down from heaven (John 6:35, 41, 47–51) ... in the natural world, birth pains precede the birth of a child, but for Zion, the woman representing Israel, birth pains will follow not precede giving birth to a nation in a day (Isa 66:7–8). Zion is the woman who will give birth to a spiritual Cain and a spiritual Abel in a day; to a spiritual Esau and a spiritual Jacob in a day. She is the woman foreshadowed by Eve, and by Mary, mother of Jesus, for her children will be sons of God through the last Adam, a life-giving spirit (1 Cor 15:45). They will not be conceived naturally, but by impregnation through the Holy Spirit. And in a reversal of the natural world, the younger shall serve the elder, for righteous Abel/Jacob will be born before Cain/Esau, whose birth comes from the great falling away (2 Thess 2:3). But the younger shall also murder and seek to murder the elder because of the younger’s lawlessness; because the elder will be a so-called Judaizing heretic as far as the younger is concerned. And where this is going is typologically, the shadow and copy of a spiritual thing precedes the spiritual thing (*v.* 46) and appears as the mirror image of the spiritual thing; hence spiritual labor pains follow birth rather than precede birth as happens in the natural world.

Translating the above into the Sabbath being a test of Israel through the giving of manna on six days of the week as a physical type of Christ coming as the true bread of life that has come down from heaven, the Sabbath remains the test, but it is on the Sabbath that a double portion of “bread” is given to disciples rather than on the sixth day. Therefore, the Christian who does not enter into God’s presence on the Sabbath is as the natural Israelite who did not gather twice as much manna on the sixth day and thus went hungry on the Sabbath: the Christian who does not appear before God on the Sabbath to “eat” of Christ [this is not advocating taking the Passover sacraments of bread and wine weekly] by feeding on His words will go hungry during the week and will slowly starve if this son of God doesn’t sell his *birthright to salvation* to the Adversary for a bowl of pottage as Esau sold his.

The logic for genuine born of spirit disciples being identified as Esau through their refusal to enter into God’s rest on the seventh day is encapsulated in what Jesus said about being the bread of life. Thus, while these disciples are still in the womb of grace, they are hated because they are willing to sell their birthright to the Adversary for bread that will not satisfy, bread that comes from this world, “the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possession” (1 John 2:16), all things that will pass away along with this world that is passing away (*v.* 17).

The rest that Christians are to enter is outwardly manifest in Sabbath observance, the visible showing of an Israelite entering into God’s presence. And the juxtaposition of Israel being the nation that left Egypt, carried by the Lord “as a man carries his son” (Deut 1:31), not believing the Lord but rebelling against Him so that this Israel could not enter into His rest with the Christian Church not believing the Lord but rebelling against Him—the Church being the nation that left sin, carried by the Lord as children of God, but rebelling against Christ through rejecting His “Jewish” commandments and profaning His “Jewish” Sabbaths and thereby returning to sin—will see this latter Israel burning its firstborns in the lake of fire, the second death, as it, too, cannot enter into God’s presence.

Israel continues as the holy nation of God even though the nation [i.e., the children that entered Judea] shrank in size down to one man, Jesus of Nazareth, as the reality of only one natural Israelite that left Egypt entering into the Promised Land, this one

natural Israelite being Joshua, the servant of the man Moses [Caleb was of Esau, but had left his parentage to join with Israel].

In what would seem to be an oxymoron, the Christian Church is not Israel even though it includes all of endtime Israel; for the Church has become an instrument of the devil through its voluntary disobedience, manifest through the day on which it attempts to enter into God's presence. Yes, this is true: with very few exceptions, the Christian Church is today of Satan, whose ministers appear as servants of righteousness (2 Cor 11:14–15) but inwardly are liars and ravenous wolves intent upon devouring the flocks of God, beginning with the flocks' wallets.

Today, two schisms divide the sons of God from the sons of the devil. The first and great schism is the practice of sinning, of transgressing the commandments of God; for to break one commandment is to break the commandments (Jas 2:10) thus weekly breaking the Sabbath commandment causes Christians to visibly practice sinning.

But there is a second schism that is like the first: not having love for one's brother; and Sabbatarian disciples divided themselves by this schism into those who are of God and those who are of the devil, for no flock within greater Christendom has less love for their brothers than do Sabbatarian disciples who believe they possess all of the "truth."

The Christian Church has profaned God's Sabbaths in a manner spiritually equivalent to how the children of Israel in Judea profaned God's Sabbaths: when the Christian Church attempts or has attempted to enter into God's presence, it has not first cleansed itself by removing from itself evil, disobedience, rebellion against God, oppression of the poor and of the weak. Instead, it makes many prayers and sings many hymns and in weak homilies, it professes love for Christ. In candlelight vigils it protests the evils of this world, but then it takes political favors and bribes from the prince of this world, charges usury to the poor, warehouses widows and widowers in nursing homes where they are left to die alone, and auctions off its vote in democratic elections to "the lowliest [basest] of men" (Dan 4:17). It looks like the world, acts like the world, but insists that it is not of this world but of heaven.

God said to Jerusalem at the time of its Babylonian captivity that Samaria was its older sister and Sodom was its younger sister (Ezek 16:46) even though Samaria had gone into captivity more than a century earlier and Sodom had been destroyed by fire in the days of Abraham. What is seen is that as there shall be an endtime holy city of Jerusalem, there shall also be an endtime Samaria and an endtime Sodom, to which God has already said:

Hear the word of the Lord,
you rulers of Sodom!
Give ear to the teaching of our God
you people of Gomorrah!
"What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?
says the Lord;
I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams
and the fat of well-fed beasts;
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
or of lambs, or of goats.
"When you come to appear before me,
who has required of you
this trampling of my courts?
Bring no more vain offerings;
incense is an abomination to me.
New moon and Sabbaths and the calling of convocations—
I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly:

Your new moons and your appointed feasts
my soul hates;
they have become a burden to me;
I am weary of bearing them.
When you spread out your hands,
I will hide my eyes from you;
even though you make many prayers,
I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.
Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,
learn to do good;
seek justice,
correct oppression;
bring justice to the fatherless,
plead the widow's cause. (Isa 1:10–17)

God cannot abide iniquity or lawlessness coupled to solemn assemblies dedicated to Him. God cannot abide rebellion against Him when Israel attempts to enter into His presence. And the Christian Church practices rebellion against God—practices sinning—when it attempts to enter into His presence on the following day, the day after the Sabbath.

This “Sodom” to whom the prophet Israel writes is the children of Israel.

Following the transgressions of Solomon, king of Israel, the children of Israel divided into the northern house of Israel or kingdom of Samaria, and the southern house of Judah or kingdom of Jerusalem. Both houses of Israel practiced sinning, with only occasional and temporary lapses into obedience. Thus, not all who had descended from Israel belonged to “Israel” (Rom 9:6) throughout this period; for Israel means some form of “*one who prevails with God*,” and those natural descendants of the patriarchs who do not prevail with God but continue in their deceitful and lawless ways do not belong to “Israel” regardless of their biological descent.

The polis of Sodom in which Lot lived serves, for the prophet Isaiah, as a shadow and type of a latter Sodom that will be the younger sister of Jerusalem ... the sins of Jerusalem's sister Sodom and her daughters were pride, excess of food and prosperous ease but not aiding the poor and needy, being haughty and doing an abomination before God (Ezek 16:49–50), so God removed them when He saw the abomination. And the mingling of past and future when God “‘will restore their fortunes, both the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters’” (v. 53) has Sodom not being the city in which Lot lived but rather the Christian Church as the younger sister of Jerusalem.

When the Lord, through the prophet Isaiah, condemns Sodom for mingling iniquity with the holy convocations of God, readers do not see new moons, Sabbaths, or holy convocation disappearing through being abolished. Rather, the Israel identified as “Sodom” is condemned for how it observes these Sabbath days, for the reality of a Sabbath is, again, entering into the presence of God, and God will turn His back to those who oppress the poor or who make a practice of sinning.

All of this reduces down to, as not all who naturally descended from Israel belonged to Israel, not all of the Christian Church belongs to Christ and by extension, to Israel. Therefore, what is seen is that natural Israel forms the shadow and type of the Christian Church ... the Christian Church does not supersede Israel as the holy nation of God, but continues on as the Israel that is the holy nation (1 Pet 2:9) of God. There is no

replacement of Israel by the Christian Church, which is—as Jesus said of the Jewish leaders of His day—of the devil, having made its father the devil through its practice of sinning or transgressing the commandments of God, with the Sabbath commandment being the principle commandment that it visibly breaks. And as a few within Israel were of God throughout the generations [7,000 in Elijah’s day], there are a few within the Christian Church in every generation who are of God.

Taking all of this a step farther, what the Lord delivered to the prophet Ezekiel about restoring the fortunes of Jerusalem, Samaria, and Sodom has both Samaria and Sodom being daughters of Jerusalem in the future as opposed to sisters:

For thus says the Lord God: I will deal with you as you have done, you who have despised the oath in breaking the covenant, yet I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish for you an everlasting covenant. Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed when you take your sisters, both your elder and your younger, and I will give them to you as daughters, but not on account of my covenant with you. I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the Lord, that you may remember and be confounded, and never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I atone for you for all that you have done, declares the Lord God. (Ezek 16:59–63)

The concept of the Christian Church being the offspring of Jerusalem is seen in Revelation:

And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. ... She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, times, and half a time. The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (Rev 12:1–2, 5, 13–17)

The woman is a sign in heaven, not here on earth, but it was Israel here on earth that gave birth to Jesus of Nazareth who was caught to God and to His throne. So Israel is not merely a nation here on earth that can be likened to the waters of humanity, or the armies of earthly nations. The Sea of Reeds swallowing the armies of Pharaoh is a type (Ex 15:12) of the split Mount of Olives (Zech 14:3-4) swallowing the armies surrounding Jerusalem at the end of the age. And what becomes increasingly apparent is that Israel leaving Egypt is a shadow and type of endtime Israel leaving sin and death, with Assyria now representing death, the fourth horseman of the Apocalypse, in a manner like Egypt representing sin and being the third horseman that makes merchandize of both the early barley harvest and the latter wheat harvest of the Promised Land.

The “rest of the woman’s offspring” are the oil and the wine, the processed fruits of the Promised Land that sin cannot harm.

The portion of endtime Israel that constitutes the 144,000 virgins (Rev 14:1–5) is separate from “the rest of her offspring” (Rev 12:17) ... together, of today’s Israel, natural

and spiritual, a remnant of the woman's offspring [Christ Jesus is the offspring, the male child caught up to heaven] and the 144,000 cross from the first half of the seven endtime years of tribulation into the last 1260 days. And though Sabbatarian disciples today and in the future will identify themselves as the entirety of the true Christian Church, Israel is larger than just the offspring of the woman. But only that portion of Israel that follows Christ Jesus belongs of Israel.

As for the visible Christian Church: its father is the Adversary, and even after a third of humankind is slain for a second time, the remainder of humankind will "not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols" (Rev 9:20). They are evildoers, the spiritually filthy of this world, and this is not how they perceive themselves so much work must be done to get these "Christians" to walk as Jesus walked.

4.

Despite the fancy footwork of Protestant linguistics about the Sabbath being rest in Christ and only a figure of what was to come, the seventh-day Sabbath has always been a physical sign between *YHWH* and Israel that the holy nation knows its *Elohim* sanctifies the nation (Ex 31:13). *YHWH* sanctified no nation other than Israel. Today, the Father and the Son sanctify no spiritual nation but Israel, a nation consisting entirely of individuals who have been circumcised of heart, by Spirit and not by human hands (Rom 2:26–29; Col 2:11). This nation is composed of drawn and called disciples of Christ Jesus, with many being drawn and called but with few being chosen (Matt 22:14). Few will walk as Jesus walked or will imitate the Apostle Paul (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17), who testified before Festus that he had committed no offense against the law of the Jews, against the temple, or against Caesar (Acts 25:8). Most "Christians" live as Gentiles, not Judeans, how Peter taught Gentile converts to live.

Again, the testimony of Peter, Paul, and John is that disciples are to live inwardly as Jews, which is the only way for someone from *the nations* to make a natural Jew jealous, the reason Paul gives for salvation coming to Gentiles.

The marriage covenant that made Israel the physically holy nation of God (Ex 19:5–6) was utterly abolished (Eph 2:15) when Israel killed the grantor of the covenant at Calvary. The *Logos* or *Theos*, the spokesman for *YHWH* and the One who, at Sinai, married a faithless nation, was not free to marry another until death ended this first marriage (Rom 7:1–4) between physical human beings and their deity. But when the *Logos* entered His creation as His only Son, born of woman as the man Jesus of Nazareth and not as Himself, the *Logos* no longer existed in the supra-dimensional heavenly realm. As a deity, He died. He existed as His only Son, a human being, physically circumcised, a natural Israelite who was descended from King David. He was flesh [*soma*] and blood or shallow breath [*psuche*] until He received the divine Breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] when the Holy Spirit descended as a dove and lit on Him. At that moment, He became the Son of the Father.

What I realized when I set out to prove my stepfather wrong about Sabbath observance in 1959 was that it isn't to early Church fathers or to rabbinical scholars that *Christians* are to go for understanding of Scripture, but to Christ Jesus, the first disciples, and to Paul.

Question: If all in Asia had left Paul (2 Tim 1:15), who laid the foundation for the spiritual house of God (1 Co 3:10–11), then to whom in Asia in the 1st-Century CE can someone go for instruction?

There can be no one in Asia. Nor can there be anyone in Greece or in Judea, for the saints at Corinth were questioning whether Paul was really of God, and even Jewish converts in Judea wanted to kill Paul for allegedly teaching that Jewish disciples did not need to circumcise their sons.

The early Church fathers come from Syria, or Asia, or Greece. They come from fellowships who were no longer of Paul even though they held tightly what Paul wrote, for his epistles contain concepts then hard to understand, concepts that could be twisted by lawless disciples into instruments of their own destruction.

The Father and the Word when together as *YHWH*, circumcised Israel's *Elohim* (Ex 20:2–3), structured human languages such that the sun and the moon are more likely to dissolve into space than for readers and reading communities to agree on what objects [meanings] should be assigned to linguistic icons [words, oral or inscribed]. Without agreement, communication between communities will remain partial at best and nearly impossible across languages. This is for cause: *YHWH* said, “Behold, they [the residents of Babel] are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing 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 emphasis added).

God might not be the author of confusion, but He is certainly the one who divorced firmly attached “meanings” from “words,” thereby producing the confusion that has Judaism and Unitarians attaching singularity to the pronoun “us” in the above passage, which is properly translated. The plural pronoun is not a mistake as strict monotheists insist; nor has the plural been used to intensify the majesty of God.

A problem exists with the English linguistic icon *God*, which Anglo-Saxon ancestors refused to quit using when the Roman Church sent missionaries to the British Isles at the end of the sixth century CE. The English icon *God* was used to convey the sense of *Father*. These Old English users would not accept the Latin term *Deos*, for it did not convey this concept which the English icon did. Now, stepping forward in time, in its modern broad application, the icon *God* is used in the same manner that *Elohim* is used, but *God* as an icon is inherently singular and is the name of the *house* to which Jesus went to prepare rooms or stays for His disciples (John 14:2), whereas *Elohim* is the regular plural of the singular *Eloah*. And this inherent concept of singleness that the icon *God* possesses supports the concealment of the Son in the Father in the same way that “created eternity” was, of old, placed in human hearts so that humankind could not know “what God has done from the beginning to the end” (Eccl 3:11) ... the glorified Jesus is the beginning and the end (Rev 22:13). Thus, the creation concealed Christ Jesus from Israel just as the icon *God* conceals the Father from Christendom.

The claim of Scripture is that God [θεός—*Theos*] is the Creator of all that is (John 1:1–3). God [*Theos*] revealed Himself to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus said that this *Theos* is the God of the living, not the dead (Matt 22:32). The “living” refers to those who have either been born of Spirit or have the promise of inheriting eternal life; the *living* refers to those who have spiritual life as opposed to those who are physically breathing. Hence, when Jesus said, “For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will” (John 5:21), Jesus doesn’t create the riddle: *if the Father raises the dead, to whom does the Son give life? Can he give life to those who are already alive?* Rather, in the unspoken portion of the metaphor, Jesus said that the Father raises the dead by inserting spiritual life into formally lifeless tents of flesh through receipt of His divine Breath, the reality of being born again or born anew or born of Spirit. Now to these new creatures that are sons of God domiciled in tents of flesh, Jesus will give life to whichever ones He will by causing the mortal flesh to put on immortality, thereby transforming what is perishable flesh into imperishable spirit.

The mystery of God is that the Father gives life to the dead through receipt of His divine Breath, and then the Son, to whom all judgment has been given, will give “life” to those who are alive in a tent of flesh through the perishable flesh putting on immortality.

So both the Father and the Son must give life to a disciple before this son of God receives a glorified body. Therefore, the Son does, indeed, give life to whomever He chooses, with those whom he chooses being determined by their judgment. So it is not enough to be born of Spirit. A person must also put on immortality or the person will perish in fire.

Eternal life is the gift of God. Human beings must receive this gift before they have life in the heavenly realm; they are not humanly born with eternal life.

The power to give life is the power of God. No person has spiritual life until the Father gives this life to the person through Him raising the person from the dead by a second birth by Spirit. This is what Jesus told Nicodemus that Nicodemus couldn't comprehend, and even today, it cannot be said strongly enough: *Eternal life is the gift of God* (Rom 6:23), not something inherited from the person's human father. To say otherwise reveals the extent to which the person believes the serpent's lie first told to Eve that she would not surely die.

The *Theos* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the *Logos* who, in the beginning, was with the God [τὸν θεόν] and who was God [θεός]. This *Theos* came as His Son, His only (John 3:16), to be born as the man Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:14). He became the Son of the Father when the divine Breath of the Father descended upon Him as a dove and gave the man Jesus a second birth as the beloved son of the Father—Jesus came as His own Son, and He became the Son of the Father when the Holy Spirit descended upon Him as a dove. And in this model, Jesus fulfilled all righteousness.

Because meaning must be assigned to linguistic icons, the person educated unto unbelief will not find grammatically separate beings in *Theos* and in the icon's accusative case ending, *the Theon*, but will “explain away” these two icons' separateness by pointing to Koine Greek's grammar rules, and there is merit in what they contend, for *Theos* and *Theon*, in fact, form one deity consisting of two entities, not in the way a family consists of all who hold the same surname, but in the way a person consists of many parts but has one head, is one hypostasis, and possesses one personhood, the personhood of the house. If God were more than one, the Kingdom of heaven would be divided and would not stand. But “one” means first unity, then singleness as displayed in the Tetragrammaton *YHWH*, in which two are one as if married. So leave the unbelievers be: let them snicker to themselves about what they perceive to be doublespeak and a childish rendering of the Greek into English, for those who will enter the kingdom of God must first come to God as children, not as scoffers. But as child psychologists have taught endtime disciples, infants cannot connect symbols to referents. Human infancy and maturation reveals spiritual infancy and maturation in grace and knowledge, and as human infants of less than thirty months cannot comprehend a symbol standing for a referent whereas this is almost embarrassingly easy for them when 36 months old, a spiritual infant of equivalent age cannot comprehend that Scripture serves as the symbol for the invisible Book of Life in way analogous to the man Jesus serving as a symbol for the invisible God, the Most High.

The man Jesus of Nazareth came as *Theos'* only Son to reveal the Father to those whom the Father has made spiritually alive through receipt of His divine Breath after the pattern through which Jesus fulfilled all righteousness. The world did not know the Father before Jesus came to reveal Him, and does not now know the Father (John 17:25), concealed in the singularity of translation. But those whom the Father has raised from the dead—to repeat, they were spiritually dead even though they were physically living—know the Father because the man Jesus made the Father known to His first disciples who, by their testimonies coupled to the testimonies of Moses and the Prophets, reveal what could not be known through observation or measurement.

The narrative of Scripture begins with marriage and ends with marriage. In the beginning were two who functioned as one as if married: “Then God said, ‘Let us make

man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen 1:26); “So God created man in his own image ... male and female he created them” (v. 27).

In the beginning were *Theos* and *the Theon*, both God, both masculine singular nouns, the first in nominative case, the latter in accusative case, but the first not structurally the latter, with John’s use of parallelism preventing the first from being the latter—and with the *Logos* functioning as the helpmate of the latter. But these two functioned as one in the way that Adam said of Eve: “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen 2:24). A physical man and a woman as one flesh, therefore, reveal the invisible, spiritual things of God (Rom 1:20), with these invisible attributes being that in the beginning were two who functioned as one spirit. Hence, the assignment of singularity to the icon “one”—as opposed to “unity”—reveals that the person knows neither Christ Jesus nor the Father.

The two who were in the beginning are disclosed in the Hebrew linguistic icons used for God: *Elohim* and the Tetragrammaton *YHWH*. In Hebrew, the word or linguistic icon for “God” is *El* as in *El Shaddai* or “God Almighty” (from Gen 17:1). *Elohim*, now, is the regular plural [the “im” ending] of *Eloah*, the linguistically singular noun, and *Eloah* deconstructs to /El/+ /ah/, with the /ah/ radical representing “breath,” either vocalized or aspirated. Thus, *Elohim* is (*El + ah*) + (*El + ah*) an undetermined number of times. But the Tetragrammaton gives the multiple: two. For *YHWH* deconstructs to /YH/ or *Yah* (see Ps 146:1a; 148:1a; 149:1a in Heb.) and /WH/, with the /H/ again linguistically representing “Breath.” So what is grammatically seen is that the *Logos* who was *Theos*, with His Breath or Spirit, is *Yah*, whom Moses and the seventy saw (Ex 24:9–11); for no human being other than the man Jesus has seen the Father (John 1:18) at any time.

What the creation or eternity has concealed (again, Eccl 3:11) is that in the beginning was a marriage that ended with the death of the Helpmate to *the Theon*, when *this Theos* entered His creation as His only Son, and in the end will be the marriage of the glorified Son to glorified disciples, who will be in the position of “helpmate” to the One who was *the Logos*.

The first disciples heard the words of the man Jesus with their ears as did the scribes and Pharisees. These words were controlled modulations of air: they were moving air, *pneuma*, the Greek linguistic icon borrowed by English speakers as a root for common words such as “pneumatic tools” and “pneumonia.” To a 1st-Century Greek speaker, *pneuma* was either deep breath or wind or an invisible force.

The Greek modifier *hagios/hagion* would translate as the English icon “holy.” In Greek, an apostrophe before the first vowel if a capital or above if lower case indicates rough breathing; thus /ha/ would be written as /há/, or as /A/.

The Greek icon phrase /πνευμα ἅγιον/, written in Roman characters as *pneuma hagion*, is the divine Breath of the Father and could be translated as Breath Holy or Wind Holy or Spirit Holy. All would be valid translations. This Breath or Wind or Spirit is not that of *the Logos* ... in inscription the Breath of Christ is seen in the icon phrase as /Πνευμα Χριστου/, translated as the “Spirit of Christ” (Rom 8:9). And this Breath of Christ has to, by context, be different from the Breath of the Father seen in the icon phrase /Πνευμα του ἐγειραντος Ἰησου ἐκ νεκρων/, translated as the “Spirit of the (One) raising Jesus from (the) dead” (Rom 8:11).

The Apostle Paul writes of two Spirits or Breaths, one that belongs to Jesus (Rom 8:9) and one that belongs to the Father, who resurrected Jesus from the dead (v. 11). Paul consistently addresses the Father and the Son in his epistles, while never sending greetings to the saints from a third personage, and Paul structurally separates the Spirit of Christ from the Spirit of the Father as he separates “one Lord” from “one God and Father” (Eph 4:5–6) while introducing complications by writing “one body and one

Spirit” (v. 4), with this one spirit being that of the Father, not that of Christ. So for Paul, the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον] does not have personhood but is a force in the heavenly realm that equates to physical breath or wind in this physical realm.

In the beginning God was two who functioned as one as if the two were married. The creation concealed the existence of the second entity from physically circumcised Israel even though the plural pronoun is properly used in Genesis 1:26 [“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness”]; in Genesis 3:22 [“Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil”]; and in Genesis 11:7 [“Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech”]. The only place where *the Theon* is seen with clarity in the Old Testament is as the Ancient of Days in Daniel’s vision (7:9–10).

Jesus said, “For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself” (John 5:26). Both have life in each, with the radical /ah/ representing life, which disciples have in them when *pneuma* is added to their *soma* [flesh] and *psuche* [shallow breath], thereby making them of tri-part construction (1 Thess 5:23). Therefore, the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* reveals that both *the Logos* and *the Theon*, whom *the Logos* was with in the beginning, had life [the /ah/ radical] within each prior to *the Logos* entering His creation as His only Son.

The Father promised the return of this life to Jesus while He yet lived as a physical human being (John 5:26).

Personhood was not assigned to the divine breath of God until the 5th-Century CE. It was an errant assignment, not made by saints who heard the voice of Jesus but by tares [false grain] pandering to the Roman Emperor. The triune deity [the Trinity] of the *visible* Christian Church is a construct that sprang from the heads of men as an attempt to maintain the idol of monotheism when two personages are clearly discernable within the godhead, and with the voice of the Father audibly heard as enunciated words uttered by His divine breath, a Holy Spirit.

Unitarians deny the divinity of Christ and as such commit blasphemy against Christ. Trinitarians, however, commit blasphemy against the Father by making the breath of the Father a God and His equal. They then compound their foolishness by praying to His breath.

Both blasphemy against the Father and the Son will be forgiven Trinitarians and Unitarians, but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven them; for blasphemy against the divine breath of the Father is unbelief. Jesus said the person who heard His words and believed the One who sent Him has eternal life: this person, even though committing blasphemy against the Father or the Son does not commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, for this person believes the words of Jesus and by extension, the words of the Father. But the person who hears but does not believe commits blasphemy against the Holy Spirit through the person’s refusal to believe what the person has heard. And the principle showing of unbelief is refusal to enter into God’s rest “while the promise of entering [God’s] rest still stands” (Heb 4:1); is refusal to keep the Sabbaths of God.

Where is wisdom? Is it found in committing blasphemy against either the Father or the Son? Is it found in borrowing Judaism’s idol of monotheism? Is it found in elevating the importance of the flesh? Is it found in not fighting the war occurring between the law of God in the mind and the law of sin and death that remains in the fleshy members of disciples? Is it found in writing anew what others have previously written? No, wisdom is not found anywhere in Christian orthodoxy. It is only found in believing Moses’ writing so that the person can hear the words of Jesus. And to most of Christendom, believing Moses is the antithesis of wisdom.

Every person who sins [i.e., transgresses the law] will die for the person's lawlessness. The person who has not been born of Spirit will die from his or her disbelief, but will be resurrected from death in the great White Throne Judgment and will then be as one or the other of the two thieves crucified with Jesus at Calvary. Every person who has been born of Spirit is now under judgment, and unbelief in this person is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and will send this person into the lake of fire, the second death. So the person who has been born of Spirit and who has the Law written on his or her heart and mind but who is a hearer only, refusing to keep the precepts of the Law, will have sinned under the Law and will be resurrected to condemnation when Jesus returns to reveal judgments (1 Cor 4:5).

Again, Israel's *Elohim* created plenty of confusion when, at Babel, linguistic objects and icons were shuffled as if they were a deck of cards. Some evidence exists to support a "brain language," a language shared by all humanity. But the many languages that have derived from Babel hinder communication, if not prevent it outright. However, at some point in the future, God will be worshipped in a pure language, brought with Christ when He returns. For now, though, humanity is separated by language, and the arbitrary assignment of objects to icons exists. Therefore, a person cannot say that a word *means* this, or *means* that, and not have the word either narrow its meaning, or shift meanings, or mean several unrelated things. Language is an imperfect method of communication, but all that we presently have.

Citing Scripture to support a point or position becomes problematic when trying to bring a person in a differing reader community to repentance. This is the unsolvable problem with precept-upon-precept exegesis. Holy Writ, like any other text, will support more than one reading, with adherents to a particular reading willing to fight for the correctness of their reading. Hence, Christians slaughter other Christians in the ultimate application of *line-upon-line, here a little, there a little* exegesis.

The mind of God has not been revealed a little here and a little there as Puritan theologians taught, with various peoples under various dispensations of grace. Rather, knowledge of God comes from entering into the presence of God, with entering into His presence verbally expressed as entering into His rest. The Promise Land of Judea represents the geographical or visible expression of having entered into God's presence or God's rest. Therefore the amount of the Promised Land actually controlled by Israel becomes a visible representation of the extent to which Israel enters into the presence of God, with Israel's greatest geographical expansion occurring under King David, a man after God's own heart. Following David, Solomon did not expand Israel's geographical boundaries, for Solomon sinned in the matter of his many foreign wives that caused him to set up idols in Jerusalem. Knowledge of God and entering into His presence began to shrink under Solomon and continued to shrink as the kingdom divided and first the northern house of Samaria then the southern house of Jerusalem were delivered into captivity so that only the poorest of the poor remain in the Promised Land after 586 BCE, and remained as vassals of the king of Babylon. So when the second temple was dedicated seventy years later (516 BCE), Israel was a vassal state of the kings of Babylon/Persia, and the temple had been rebuilt by order of Cyrus, king of Babylon/Persia. Not until the time of the Maccabean rebellion was Israel again a free people, and that freedom was very short lived for Roman legions were invited in to keep the peace; hence, when Jesus cleansed the temple, Israel controlled no more real estate than the temple mount. The visible expression of Israel's knowledge of God was reduced to the temple mount. But the "temple of God" expanded as the first disciples went forth making disciples for Christ Jesus. Unfortunately this expansion was also short lived: as the physical body of Jesus was crucified, His spiritual Body was crucified with Him (Rom 6:6). As His physical body died, His spiritual Body died. As His physical body was

resurrected after three days, His spiritual Body will be resurrected after the third day. And not until His spiritual Body is resurrected will the visible boundaries of Israel, now a nation circumcised of heart, expand and equal or exceed King David's knowledge of God.

Until the spiritual Body of Christ is resurrected through being empowered by or filled with the Holy Spirit, all of this writing about that which there is no agreement can only be the prelude to a ministry that has not yet begun ... all of this writing about which there is no agreement began on Thursday of the second full week of 2002, but the story of how I got to that place when words were heard from the mouth of God began in 1972.

During that summer of 1972, seven or eight of us fellows from the pulpmill were sitting around a campfire, talking about the upcoming hunting season, about who was shackled up with whom, about black liquor spilling into the Yaquina River, about the price of logs and stumpage when one of the fellows asked, "Whatever happened to Dave Oleman?" Another fellow replied, "He got religion." Then Gary Gettmen, the pulpmill assistant superintendent, said, "You'll never know who will fall next."

I knew who would be next; I would be. A thought that seemed as if it could be heard with my ears overwhelmed all of my senses. It was almost a *thing* within my mind. I'm fairly sure that I heard no voice, no words concealed by a thunder clap, but I knew with absolute certainty that I was next. The presence of the thought heard within my mind disrupted even my objections.

I really didn't want to be religious. If I could have, I would have said the idea of me being *next* was the most ridiculous notion that had ever passed through my head, but I couldn't shake the intensity of the thought. It was like a door being opened and me being mentally pushed through that doorway. I knew I had no choice about the matter. I was next.

And I was. The *I'm next* thought began a course of action that was unforeseen: I had started school as the biggest kid in first grade, with the best grades. At twelve and nearly six feet and 205 pounds, I was the largest freshman in high school, and I was at the top of my class academically. Four years later, I graduated as valedictorian, and entered Willamette University, Salem, Oregon, on an honors scholarship as a sixteen-year-old math major. I didn't feel a need for God; didn't know if any god existed. If anything, I was mad at God before Mom committed suicide in October 1963. Dad's sudden death when I was eleven left me filled with unfocused anger, and as long as it stayed unfocused, it didn't get in the way of me functioning in a civil manner. But when Mom committed suicide, much of that anger dissipated. I felt as if a burden had been lifted.

Even though I was still sixteen when Mom committed suicide, I was in college; so I was declared an emancipated minor by the Marion County District Court (my brother Ben says that I was actually seventeen when the ruling was made) ... I read an Internet biography of my other brother Ken, and found that he was an orphan. That surprised me, for I had never considered myself one. But yes, because Lyle never adopted any of us, my younger brothers and sisters were orphans, my brothers going to live with an aunt and my sisters with a cousin.

As an emancipated minor, I could do what I wanted. I left Willamette University and transferred to Oregon Tech where I became part of the gunsmithing program. I met my first wife while riding a bus from Reno to Klamath Falls Thanksgiving weekend 1964. She was then a student at George Fox College, and the following July, we married at the Friends Church, Sherwood, Oregon. I was eighteen, she nineteen and not pregnant. And before we married, her pastor insisted on counseling us. In addition to some good counsel, he gave her a tract that allegedly explained why the Adventists were a cult, and why the Sabbath had been changed. She studied the tract, checking every Scripture referenced, and what she found were contorted readings of text. I don't believe she ever

attended a Friends Church service after receiving that tract. She felt the tract had been dishonest with Scripture.

After marrying, I left Oregon Tech to make enough money to support a wife. My intention was to lay out a term, then return to school. But I was involved in a head-on traffic accident that left the other driver dead and me with a separated shoulder so I didn't make much money during that term. I laid out a second term, then a third term [Oregon Tech was on the quarter system]. By May 1966, I was making a thousand a month, and I had lost my incentive for returning to college. Rather, I opened my own gunshop in March 1967. And I still felt no need for God in my life. I was busy having fun, making and spending money, shooting high power competition, killing many more deer than I was lawfully allowed. At best, God would have been an inconvenience, and keeping the Sabbath holy would have required revamping my lifestyle.

Oregon Department of Fish and Game opened Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge to hunting with muzzleloading rifles in 1969, bucks only, three-point [western count] or better. The opening was intended as a quality hunt, and it was the years I participated ... by 1969, I had been building rifles for long enough that I had a local reputation for manufacturing accurate guns. The chance to hunt Hart Mountain convinced enough high power shooters to order muzzleloading rifles that I stayed busy. I was becoming entrenched in Lincoln County. I figured I would build rifles for the remainder of my life, each rifle a little better than the preceding gun. I hadn't yet mastered engraving, or the type of metal artistry seen on fine 18th-Century European rifles. But my work was professional. I had become a journeyman gunmaker, and I was satisfied with life even though I wasn't making much money. We were living on venison, potatoes and green beans. Our nearest neighbors were a half-mile away. The stump ranch on which we lived butted against the holdings of large timber companies. Neither neighbors nor passing traffic could see the house in which we lived. It was for me a desirable life.

Our first daughter was born in 1968, our second daughter in 1970. Our third daughter was born in 1972—and then came the *I'm next* thought, baptism, and relocation to Alaska's Kenai Peninsula, where I fell timber and repaired chainsaws, fished commercially, and began writing. I never returned to building firearms.

The *I'm next* thought had troubled me for a couple of weeks when my wife unexpectedly said she wanted to start tithing our income. I grudgingly agreed, something I wouldn't have done before, and I said, "Send the Adventists a check." She said she didn't want to send a check to them. I said, "Forget it. You aren't sending one anywhere." But that she had asked to send a check so soon after experiencing the *I'm next* thought was doubly upsetting. We hadn't discussed religion since we married seven years earlier. The only mention of religion was when I had told her to take our oldest daughter to Adventist Sabbath School a year or so earlier. She had. That was enough to cause the local Adventist minister to think he had a potential convert. However, after a couple of visits (during the second one he watched me slip hair from deer hides that I would tan), he apparently concluded that I wasn't civilized enough for fellowship. I never saw him again, which suited me at the time.

In September, my wife asked if I would object to a minister visiting her. I was taken back by the question. Of course I wouldn't object, but I didn't understand her need to even ask. I had no fear of cross-contamination. I remembered enough Scripture from when I was thirteen to hold my own in a theological discussion. If anything, I was curious about who had attracted her interest. So I said, in typical male communication, "No, go ahead."

After deer season, two ministers arrived, one a middle-aged man, one as young I was. I went out to the shop, sold a customer a scope, and after waiting nearly an hour,

returned to the house. Bibles were hastily closed, not something that favorably impressed me, and the older minister asked if I could stock a rifle for him. It seems that he had broken a borrowed rifle's stock over the head of a deer. I wanted the story, and we talked about hunting for most of another hour before they left. We shook hands. I was impressed that the older fellow had a firm handshake, not that oft-described wet washrag shake of too many pastors.

As soon as the ministers were in their car, I wanted to know who they were, and whom they represented. My wife brought out a cardboard box a little smaller than an apple lug. In it were twelve lessons of a Bible Correspondence Course, plus dozens of booklets, a couple of books, letters, and her study notes. I picked up the top booklet, and in a sidebar were Matthew 24 and Revelation 6 placed side by side. As a teenager I had listened to Adventist pastors try to reconcile Revelation and Daniel, and I had not heard anything that seemed logical. What I heard would have taken much more faith than reasoning to believe so I didn't believe anything. But the juxtaposition within the sidebar of the booklet about Revelation seemed to make sense, seemed logical, and suddenly made the book seem understandable. I was surprised, pleasantly so. My surprise was also frightening, not an emotion I was used to feeling. If Revelation could be understood, then maybe the Bible was more than myth. So in the next two weeks I read everything in the box; then I set about reading the Bible in the following two weeks. I read supposed proofs of the Bible's authenticity, but these proofs were less important than passage after passage making sense. The passages were logical. They reflected a deity that wasn't interested in torturing humanity forever; that had a plan to save all of humanity, not just those people missionaries reached. But I wasn't completely convinced. So when the ministers returned in a month, I had questions for them.

"What about keeping the Holy Days? God says He hates your Holy Days." The Scriptural passages I referenced were Isaiah 1:14, and Amos 5:21.

A little timidly, the younger minister (I was rough enough looking to be intimidating) said, "I think the key word in those verses is, your."

I understood. The festival days listed in Leviticus 23 aren't the Holy Days of the Jews or of Israel, but the appointed festivals of the Lord (*vv.* 2, 4, 37). The high Sabbaths were as binding upon circumcised Israel as was the weekly Sabbath, the first of the listed Holy Days. Therefore, since the Law that was outside natural Israel had relocated itself inside spiritually circumcised disciples, with the Law going from regulating what the hand and body did to what the mind thought and what the heart desired, the high Sabbaths remained as binding on spiritually circumcised Israel as was the weekly Sabbath, for collectively the high Sabbaths form a first and last Sabbath analogous to the two high days of Unleavened Bread. They stand or fall together, the reason they are listed together. Baptizing and repackaging this world's *holy days* with hot cross buns and egg-bearing rabbits or with a jolly old elf in a sleigh drawn by flying reindeer doesn't make either the days or the icons spiritually palatable.

Acknowledging Christ required acknowledging a spiritual world, and the existence of life forms or energy beings of a mostly unexplainable composition (i.e., angels) that watch me and everyone else all of the time from a dimension or dimensions to which I had no physical access. Suddenly, I wasn't so powerful, or important. With a rifle of my construction I could reach across 400, 500, even 600 yards to take a life. If I pushed my ability, I could reach across a half mile. I could lift hundreds of pounds, could push full-size pickups around. I could glance at the lean of a 200 year old tree, then fall that tree in three or four minutes. But what I could do was nothing compared to what angels could do, let alone to what *the Logos* had done when He spoke the creation into existence.

The natural inclination of human males, apparently produced by testosterone, is to perceive themselves as invincible. Intellectually, the male might well know that is not the

case, but at a hormonal level, males are young poultry cocks, ready to whip the world if it gets in their way. Thus, being drawn and called immediately initiates a war between the law of God that is now in the mind and the lawlessness of the male's natural inclinations. This war must be won by the mind, with spiritual maturity developing through fighting this war. Again, the new self is a son of God that is neither male nor female, and this new self dwells in the same body of flesh as dwells the crucified old man until this old man weakens and loses his or her breath. A newly drawn and called disciple is analogous to a circumcised Israelite and his infant son living in a fabric tent in the Wilderness of Sin. This circumcised Israelite will not, with the exception of a Joshua and a Caleb, enter God's rest because of unbelief that became disobedience when he tried to enter the following day (Num 14:11, 35, 40–41; Ps 95:10–11; Heb 3:16–4:11). The disciple's crucified old self will not enter God's rest, but will die in a wilderness of sin because of unbelief that became disobedience early in life. During the seven endtime years of tribulation, spiritually circumcised disciples will spiritually die because of unbelief that becomes disobedience when they try to enter God's rest on the following day, Sunday. The weekly Sabbath is a type, or a diminutive form of God's rest (Heb 4:9), just as the Promised Land was a type of God's rest for natural Israel.

To enter into the Sabbath is to enter into God's rest which is to enter into God's presence. The new creature has constant access to God through its high priest Christ Jesus, but the tent of flesh in which this new self dwells does not. Only when this new self brings the tent of flesh in which it dwells into Sabbath observance does unity exist between the new self, the tent of flesh, and God.

When testing Jesus, the lawyer asked what shall he do to inherit eternal life (Luke 10:25). Jesus asked the lawyer how he read the Law (*v.* 26). The lawyer answered from Deuteronomy: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all you soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself" (*v.* 27). Jesus told the lawyer, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live" (*v.* 28). So Jesus confirmed that there was a Law that would have led to righteousness and life. The lawyer only had to do what he had just said that the Law required, but the lawyer asked who his neighbor was.

The lawyer lacked having the faith necessary to accept Samaritans, who also kept the Law and worshiped God but not at Jerusalem, as his neighbors.

Paul said, "For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law" (Rom 2:14). He also wrote, "For all who have sinned without the law will perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law" (*v.* 12). So the Gentile, the Samaritan, who by nature does what the law requires shows that the law is written on his or her heart and mind. This Gentile will have his or her physical uncircumcision counted as circumcision (*v.* 26); for no longer is a Jew merely one outwardly, but "a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter" (*v.* 29). Hence, the natural Israelite who kept the Sabbath in the Promised Land physically dwelt in God's physical rest every day, and spiritually entered into God's rest on the seventh day; whereas the Gentile who physically dwells in a far land cannot enter into God's physical rest, but spiritually enters into God's rest when he or she keeps the Sabbath, a mental landscape analogous to the geographical landscape of Judea.

Let us pause for a moment: if Sabbath observance is the manifestation of entering into God's presence, does the Gentile who by nature performs what the law requires and thereby shows that the work of the law is written on his or her heart (Rom 2:14–15) but who really knows nothing about the Sabbath or about God have to keep the first four commandments to be justified by faith, for this is the situation in which much of Christendom finds itself? These self-professed Christians have no knowledge of God, or

of the law, or of the Sabbath. They have been mistaught or poorly taught or not taught at all the rudimentary principles of Christ; yet they have love for one another, with this love displayed as the Good Samaritan's love was displayed. In other words, they keep the precepts of the last six of the Ten Commandments ... is their faith enough to cause these "good" Gentile "Christians" to enter into the resurrection of firstfruits when they haven't previously entered into God's presence?

Any answer will be the wrong answer.

It is absolutely inexcusable for any teacher of Israel, of the spiritually circumcised nation, to send forth a "Christian" who doesn't know the principles of Christ, which includes Jesus saying, "If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" (John 5:46–47). Indeed, how can you believe Jesus' words if Moses' writings are unknown to you?

The holy days or high Sabbaths were kept by physical Israelites. They are now spiritual Sabbaths when Gentiles or natural Israelites dwelling in far lands (which is spiritually anywhere outside of heaven) appear before God in heavenly Jerusalem. The person is not to appear empty ... every disciple appears before God in prayer. The only possession the born of Spirit son of God has is the tent of flesh in which this new creature dwells. This son of God has no other offering it can give God. Thus, the disciple who comes before God on the high Sabbaths in prayer appears empty if this new creature does not bring the tent of flesh in which this new creature dwells into Sabbath services.

All arguments against keeping the holy days leave the disciple who makes the argument condemned before God.

Endtime disciples ask why should they keep the Sabbaths of God, what difference does a day make when Christ is to be worshiped every day? And since Jesus sat down at the right hand of God as the high priest of every disciple, have not disciples entered the spiritual reality of the Day of Atonement [*Yom Kippur*]? Natural Israelites were to come to Jerusalem three times a year: Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. These three times are separate seasons—and if disciples are today in the spiritual reality of Atonement, they cannot keep the Passover or Pentecost, or so goes the human reasoning that causes Adventists to commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This carnal reasoning is simply rebellion against God.

5.

The Feast of Weeks occurs fifty (50) days after the Wave Sheaf Offering and was one of the three times a year when all males in Israel were to appear before the Lord where He placed His name. Pentecost means fifty, and is usually said to mean "count fifty"; thus it occurs on the same day as the Feast of Weeks, thereby suggesting an association between these two observances. But the Feast of Weeks signals the end of the harvest of firstfruits, the early barley harvest of Judean hillsides. In type, it represents the harvest of spiritual firstfruits, those human beings who have been born of spirit in the so-called Church era as well as those who received the promise of inheriting eternal life prior to the Church era. It would, then, represent the resurrection of the firstfruits, with this resurrection being symbolically portrayed through typological baptism by fire.

What is seen on *Pentecost* is, first, the typological representation of the entirety of the Church era, from when disciples initially receive the Holy Spirit to when disciples are resurrected. What is also seen is, second, the typological representation of the world being baptized by spirit and by fire (*cf.* Matt 3:11; Acts 2:2–3), with the world being baptized in spirit when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28) halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation, and the world being baptized in fire with the coming of the new heaven and new earth (Rev 21:1).

As Judea brought forth two grain harvests that together represented the single harvest of the Promised Land, there will be two harvests of humanity, one when the firstfruits are resurrected to either everlasting life or to damnation, and one when the mass of humanity is resurrected from death through receipt of the divine breath of the Father in the great White Throne Judgment. This latter harvest equates to the late summer or autumn wheat harvest in Judea, and in this latter harvest every person not previously born of spirit who has drawn breath will be like one of the two thieves crucified with Jesus: without a conscious awareness of a passage of time, the person will return to life and will either seek to save his or her physical life, or the person will acknowledge that he or she is indeed worthy of death. Those who seek to save their physical lives will lose both their physical as well as their spiritual lives whereas those who acknowledge that they are worthy of death will receive life. And no one can make this determination for another.

There were not three grain harvests in Judea, only two, with the Wave Sheaf Offering not being a separate harvest, but the first of the harvest of firstfruits that ran for seven weeks, with these weeks being analogous to the seven days of Unleavened Bread when, for all of Israel, leavening represented sin, a representation that some endtime disciples now challenge. This understanding that the Wave Sheaf Offering is not a separate harvest permits disciples to see that the Feast of Unleavened Bread, referred to as *the Sabbath* by John in his gospel (see 19:31 — both the high day, the 15th day of Abib, and the entire Feast of Unleavened Bread are called σαββάτω/σαββάτου), represents the entirety of the so-called Church era, with the last high day of Unleavened Bread being a memorial to the resurrection of firstfruits at the Second Advent in exactly the same way that the Feast of Weeks represents the resurrection of firstfruits, making these seven weeks analogous to the seven days of Unleavened Bread. Thus, this so-called Church era is a form of a Sabbath in that disciples, because of grace, enter into the presence of God, with Jesus, who sat down at the right hand of the Father, serving as high priest for disciples ... again, “entering into God’s rest” is a euphemistic expression for entering into God’s presence; therefore, whenever disciples enter into God’s presence, they have entered into “rest,” or into a Sabbath, which does not negate their responsibility and need to observe the weekly and annual Sabbaths of God for the disciple is not the tent of flesh in which the new creature, born of spirit as a son of God, dwells. This new creature is to bring the tent of flesh, his only possession, into God’s presence on weekly and annual Sabbath days. If this new creature neglects so great a responsibility, this new creature takes or carries the name of God in vain. Yes, the new creature, a son of God and a disciple of Christ, carries the name “Christian” in vain if the tent of flesh in which this new creature dwells will not enter into God’s presence on the weekly and annual Sabbaths of God.

Jesus as high priest entering heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father is the reality of the high priest of Israel entering into the Holy of holies on *Yom Kipporim* [two “coverings,” not one]. There are some Sabbatarian Christians (specifically, Seventh Day Adventists), lacking in spiritual understanding, who contend that because *Yom Kipporim* occurs in the fall of the year [the 10th day of the 7th month] and because Unleavened Bread occurs in the spring of the year, disciples should not observe the high Sabbaths of God, an argument that on its surface would seem to be logical, but only until a person thinks briefly about the logic involved. If Christ ascends to heaven to enter into the Father’s presence on the fourth day of Unleavened Bread, which He would have to do to be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish (a whale), then that portion of the reality of *Yom Kipporim* represented by the lamb sacrificed on the altar occurs on the Preparation Day [the 14th of Abib] for the great day [the first high day, the 15th] of the Sabbath, with this

“Sabbath” now expanded to include both the Preparation Day and the day when the paschal lamb was selected [the 10th] and brought into Jerusalem by the high priest. Therefore the last three and a half days of Unleavened Bread would form the reality of the *Azazel* goat bearing the sins of Israel in a far land, or in the wilderness. So what occurs in the heavenly realm that is foreshadowed by the days between the 10th of Abib and the 22nd of Abib is the reality of the what happens when two goats are selected as Israel’s sin offering, one to be sacrificed on the altar for the sins of Israel and one to have the sins of Israel read over its head then to be lead into the wilderness by the hand of a fit man, with the high priest entering into the Holy of holies with the blood of the sacrificed lamb before he returns outside, having made an end of atoning for himself, the Holy Place and the tent of meeting [the temple], to confess the sins of Israel over the head of the *Azazel* goat.

The high priest of Israel, on *Yom Kipporim*, entered into the presence of God (i.e., into the Holy of holies) between sacrificing the goat on the altar and confessing over the *Azazel* goat the sins of Israel. This entrance into the presence of God is analogous to Jesus’ ascent to the Father as the Wave Sheaf Offering before He returns the same day to breathe on ten of His disciples, thereby directly transferring to them the Holy Spirit (John 20:22) ... the Church does not begin on *Pentecost*, but on the same day that Jesus ascends to the Father as the accepted sin offering for Israel and as the high priest for Israel. The Church begins on the 4th day of Unleavened Bread as a representation of the Holy Spirit being poured out on all flesh halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation, thereby liberating the third part of humankind from sin and death (*cf.* Zech 13:9; Rev 11:15; Dan 7:9-14 — the single kingdom of this world will become the kingdom of the Father and His Christ, one like a Son of Man, on only one occasion, not on many occasions).

Because the realization that *Yom Kipporim* is a representation of what happens during Unleavened Bread, and because what happens during Unleavened Bread is the representation of what happens during the entirety of the Church era, and because what the high Sabbaths represent will be unfamiliar teaching for many Sabbatarian disciples, the following needs to be emphasized:

- By custom and prevailing usage, the entire period when an Israelite male journeyed to Jerusalem to observe the Passover, the first of the three seasons when all males were to appear before the Lord, was called *Sabbath* and was an entering into the presence of God.
- The first high Sabbath of Unleavened Bread was, now, the great day or Sabbath of the *Sabbath*, with the entirety of this period being an afflicting the soul [i.e., flesh] by every Israelite male.
- Unleavened bread is called *bread of affliction* (Deut 16:3), and the seven days of Unleavened Bread are remembrance of the affliction Israel experienced in the wilderness, affliction encapsulated in *Yom Kipporim* [the Day of Atonement], and affliction analogous to what endtime Israel will experience during the Tribulation.
- By eating *bread of affliction* for the entire period when an Israelite male would have been in Jerusalem to observe the *Sabbath*, the Israelite male would have been “afflicting his soul.”

Masochistic mutilation of the flesh has no place in Christian worship. The flogging or scourging that Jesus experienced is not something to be emulated; for it was by that flogging and His splattered blood that Jesus as the reality of the high priest of Israel made an atonement for Himself as the high priest made an atonement for himself with the blood of a bull before he entered into the Holy of holies on *Yom Kipporim*. Plus, the flogging weakened Jesus so that His physical death on the cross would be hastened. And

as no disciple can enter into the Father's presence as the Wave Sheaf Offering—as no disciple can enter into the Father's presence on the first day of the week, but will enter on the seventh day, the last day—no disciple should be so presumptuous as to attempt to bear the stripes Jesus bore.

Returning now to what needs emphasized:

- Jesus enters Jerusalem as the selected Passover Lamb of God on the 10th day of Abib (*cf.* John 19:31, 42; 12:1, 12); He enters as the paschal lamb and as the next generation of high priest (the symbolism of riding the colt).
- When Jesus eats the Passover on the dark portion of the 14th of Abib, He changes the sacrifice symbolism: by directing His disciples to eat unleavened Bread as a representation of His flesh and to drink from the cup as a representation of His blood, He identifies Himself as the Passover Lamb of God, analogous to the goat sacrificed on the altar on *Yom Kipporim* as the sin offering for Israel.
- Drinking from the cup on Passover, taken the night Jesus was betrayed, now becomes the covenantal covering for sin and will remain the covenantal covering for sin until the new covenant (Jer 31:31–34; Heb 8:8–12) is implemented after the Passover covenant ends.
- A covenant made in the flesh goes from the shedding of blood to the shedding of blood (Heb 9:22–23); thus, the Passover covenant that began in Egypt with the death of Egyptian firstborns (Isa 43:3; Ex 12:29) has been in effect ever since and will remain in effect until the lives of firstborns are again given as ransom for Israel (Isa 43:4) at a second Passover liberation of Israel, now a spiritually circumcised nation.

Although it is popular to teach that the new covenant (Jer 31:31–34; Heb 8:8–12) has been in effect since Calvary, the teaching is false, for under the new covenant all will “Know the Lord” so there will be no need for Christian ministry or any other sort of ministry. Hence, because all do not today “Know the Lord,” the covenant that was “becoming obsolete and growing old” and ready to vanish away (Heb 8:13) in the 1st-Century retains its same old and ready to vanish away state. And if the new covenant has not yet been implemented, then Israel, physically and spiritually circumcised, remains under the Passover covenant made on the day when the Lord took the fathers of Israel and led them by the hand out of Egypt.

If the new covenant has not yet been implemented, then sins are not forgiven under the terms of the new covenant but are forgiven under the terms of the Passover covenant made when Israel left Egypt, with drinking from the cup on the night that Jesus was betrayed disclosing participation in this covenant by which sins are today forgiven (Matt 26:27–28).

Now returning to what needs emphasized:

- The resurrected Jesus enters into the presence of God on the 4th day of Unleavened Bread as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering, but He returns to His disciples on this same day, breathes on them and says, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22).
- On *Yom Kipporim* [day of coverings], two male goats are selected as Israel's sin offering. The high priest enters the sanctuary, and after making atonement for himself with the blood of a bull, he sprinkled this blood with his finger on the front of the Mercy Seat—
- In the second temple was neither the Ark of the Covenant nor the Mercy Seat so it was not technically possible for the high priest to make atonement for himself or his family, or for Israel after a remnant of Israel returned from Babylon.

- Following the Lord's delivery of Israel into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar (ca 586 BCE), the physical nation of Israel did not again enter into God's presence.
- The glory of God had left the first temple (Ezek chap 10) and did not return until the man Jesus entered Herod's temple to cleanse it at the beginning of His ministry (John 2:13–22).

It needs to be remembered that in the first temple after making atonement for himself and his family, the high priest left the Holy of holies and killed the goat selected to die on the altar for Israel's sins. He then brought its blood inside the veil and did with it what he had done with the blood of the bull when he made atonement for himself. He would then leave the Holy of holies and make atonement for the Holy Place and the tent of meeting [a type of the temple, which was a type of the Church], and when he finished atoning for the Holy Place, the tent of meeting, and the altar, he would lay hands on the live goat and confess over it the sins of Israel.

- Christ Jesus, as the high priest of spiritually circumcised Israel, did not enter into the presence of God with an atoning of bull's blood but by His own righteousness and by His splattered blood when He was flogged.
- He became the sin offering for Israel when, at Calvary, He took on the sins of Israel (and of all humanity for all of humanity will become Israel) and with His blood entered into the presence of God as natural Israel's high priest entered into the Holy of holies.
- Jesus takes on the sins of Israel on the Preparation Day, the 14th of Abib; thus, the reality encompassed by the high priest on *Yom Kipporim* entering the Holy of holies to make atonement for Israel occurs on the 14th through the 18th of Abib.

After making atonement for Israel, the high priest left the Holy of holies to confess the sins of Israel over the head of the *Azazel* goat. Likewise, after appearing before the Father and being accepted, the glorified Jesus returned to His disciples and gave to these ten disciples spiritual life through the direct transfer of the Holy Spirit by breathing on them. He, now, as their high priest will bear their sins before the Father, for they are covered by His righteousness, the garment of grace.

- With the ten disciples receiving a second birth through receipt of the Holy Spirit (John 20:22), these ten have life in the heavenly realm, and Jesus, as the reality of the *Azazel* goat bears their sins in this far land.

Remember, it is possible to sin in that portion of the heavenly realm within the bottomless pit, for the disciple born of spirit who looks on another person with lustful intent but never acts upon this lust commits no sin or transgression of the law in this world, but sins mentally or spiritually; hence, this person will have sin that needs "covered" by grace in the heavenly realm. Likewise, the disciple who uses partial truths to deceive another might well tell no lie with his or her tongue, but the disciple by intentionally uttering what would deceive lies in the spiritual realm and needs the covering of grace. Same for the disciple who is angry with his or her brother: most likely no murder was committed in the physical realm, but murder was committed in the spiritual realm.

- Jesus will continue to bear the sins of Israel as long as disciples are covered by grace, which is the reality of Jesus covering His disciples with His righteousness as if His righteousness were a garment or cloak covering His Body (i.e., the Church).
- Israel, now a nation circumcised of heart, lives without sin being imputed to it when these sins are covered by grace.

- But when the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:30), the garment of grace will be stripped away and disciples will be then covered by their obedience.
- The seven days of Unleavened Bread represent that period when Israel lives without sin;
- Therefore the entirety of the Church era that has disciples covered by grace is represented by the six hours of the great day of the Sabbath between when the Passover lamb is sacrificed and when the death angel passed over all the land to slay firstborns not covered by the blood of the paschal lamb.

The affliction of the Tribulation is now the seven endtime years when Israel will be empowered by the Holy Spirit and liberated from indwelling sin and death in the reality foreshadowed by natural Israel's liberation and exodus from Egypt. The last high Sabbath of Unleavened Bread represents the glorification of disciples, with those who have received the promise of everlasting life and those who have died in the faith preceding to glory those who are still alive by the twinkling of an eye.

The entirety of the selection and harvest of the firstfruits, beginning with Christ Jesus and continuing through to the glorification of the saints, is a period when Israel is without sin; hence, a period when Israel symbolically eats *bread of affliction*, thereby "afflicting" the flesh of this holy nation. The compression of this period will cause Israel to fast on *Yom Kipporim*, the day symbolically representing when Christ Jesus both covers the sins of Israel in this world with His death at Calvary and when He covers the sins of born-again disciples in the heavenly realm by bearing their sins until a spiritual body is given for them. Disciples afflict the flesh for one day in the fall of the year by fasting as a representation of the harvest of firstfruits that have lived without sin being imputed to them. The reality of *Yom Kipporim* encompasses all that occurs between when Jesus entered Jerusalem on the 10th day of Abib through to when Christ Jesus no longer bears the sins of Israel.

There will be a second and much larger harvest of the earth in the great White Throne Judgment, and it is this latter harvest that is the focus of the fall holy day season which is the reason for the compression of the early harvest to a single day in the fall. Most of those "harvested" in the great White Throne Judgment will have lived as contemporaries with firstfruits, meaning that most of this harvest has been separated from firstfruits only by the firstfruits having been born of spirit while the Adversary still reigned over humankind as the prince of the power of the air.

Those Sabbatarian disciples who argue that because Christ has entered into the presence of the Father as the reality of the high priest entering into the Holy of holies on *Yom Kipporim*, disciples do not and should not observe the annual Sabbaths of God are, collectively, false teachers and false prophets. They are without spiritual understanding, and following in the example of the Apostle John who in his last years would not be under the same roof as *Kerinthus* because of *Kerinthus'* false teaching about the nature of God, endtime disciples should be hesitant to enter services of fellowships that spurn observing the high Sabbaths of God. This means, simply, those who are of *Philadelphia* will find that they have no fellowship with disciples who follow Ellen G. White's teachings.

For the past seventy years or so, the churches of God have taught some variation of a three harvest doctrine, with Christ not being the First of the firstfruits but the sole first harvest of God, thereby separating Christ from His disciples by the period represented by the seven weeks between the Wave Sheaf Offering and the Feast of Weeks. This separation has tended to cause Sabbatarian disciples to make Christ into a created being, the error of Bishop Arius—and here is where error posing as enlightenment has taken many disciples far from God, for once Christ becomes a created being and the only begotten Son of the Creator, importance is assigned to the flesh. What Paul taught is lost,

and Paul's reliability as a teacher becomes suspect; for with importance assigned to the flesh, disciples are Jew or Greek, male or female. Importance is assigned to how God's name is enunciated, as well as to construction of a physical temple in earthly Jerusalem, and to those things reported in the *Jerusalem Post*, and to the rise of a united Europe and to the decline of the English-speaking peoples. But the demise of the United States has been continually prophesied to occur in only *a few short years* by Herbert W. Armstrong and his theological followers ever since Hitler's rise to power.

What is true is that every person who has drawn breath will appear before the Lord during one of two harvest seasons to have his or her judgment revealed. But both the barley harvest and most of the main crop wheat harvest have grown to maturity in fields figuratively separated by the firstfruits having the Spirit of God and the wheat not yet receiving birth from above, a second birth that "raises the dead" (John 5:21). And therein lays the typological difficulty that kept the plan of God concealed from both the natural and the spiritual nations of Israel until the time of the end: Judean hillsides only brought forth two grain harvests, not three, with the first harvest, the barley harvest, stretched over a seven week period from the Wave Sheaf Offering to the holy convocation at the Feast of Weeks (a.k.a. Pentecost). As the crop ripened, barley was harvested every day of these seven weeks, with more harvested toward the end of the seven weeks than at the beginning of these weeks. Barley wasn't harvested only on the day of the Wave Sheaf Offering, then again seven weeks later.

There was only one harvest of firstfruits, with this harvest occurring as an on-going event for seven weeks, a daily activity as fields ripened. Jesus as the First of the firstfruits begins the same harvest that will see His disciples glorified as younger brothers (Rom 8:29). He is the uncovered Head of the Son of Man as disciples form the now covered (by grace) Body of this same Son of Man ... the Son of Man represents the entire harvest of firstfruits.

The reality of *the Logos* entering His creation as His only Son then following baptism receiving a second life through receipt of the divine breath of the Father, which descended as a dove to light and remain on Him, is actually more than those disciples who are physically minded can comprehend. Inevitable, these physically minded disciples insist that the man Jesus was the Son of the Father from conception, which makes the Father the Creator of all that has been made. These disciples absolutely refuse to hear anyone who attempts to tell them what John said in the only gospel written to address Christological problems that had not troubled the very early Church. Today, physically minded disciples actively and aggressively attack John, contending that he is mistranslated or that his gospel was corrupted by early transcribers. They simply cannot abide the idea that Jesus entered His creation as His only Son and didn't become the Son of the Most High until he received the spirit of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ]. Above all else, they do not want to be younger brothers to Jesus, and they won't be if they persist in teaching what they believe.

Continuing with refuting popularized false teaching, although it has been taught that the law was given at Sinai on Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks, Scripture does not supply the "exactness" necessary to make this teaching true. In fact, Scripture makes this teaching not true; for Israel came to Mount Sinai and the wilderness on Sinai on the 1st day of the third month, which would have been six weeks after the Passover liberation of Israel, and in the middle of the fifth week after Israel crossed the Sea of Reeds, meaning that when the Law was given from atop Mount Sinai on the 3rd day (or 4th day) of the third month, six weeks would have passed since Israel crossed the Sea of Reeds. Now, following the giving of the Law and Israel saying with one voice, "All the words of that the Lord [YHWH] has spoken we will do" (Ex 24:3), and the shedding of blood that makes this marriage covenant a temporary thing and a shadow of a heavenly reality (*cf.*

Ex 24:5–8; Heb 9:23), Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up on Sinai and saw the Lord (Ex 24:9-11). Then the Lord said to Moses to come farther up the mountain (*v.* 12). For six days Moses waited while a cloud covered the mountain, then on the seventh day, Moses was called to enter into the cloud (*v.* 16). This 7th day would have been the 10th day of the third month ... the 10th day of the month becomes a day of selection, and this 10th day would have been Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks as Sadducees reckoned when the first handful of barley is presented to God as the Wave Sheaf Offering. The Law wasn't given on Pentecost; it was given a week earlier. Israel coming to Sinai would have been on the day Jesus left His disciples (Acts 1:2–3).

After ascending to His Father on the day of His resurrection, Jesus returned to be with His disciples for 40 days ... for 40 of the 50 days between the Wave Sheaf Offering and the Feast of Weeks, Jesus was with His disciples, making the last 10 days analogous to the period between when Israel arrived at Sinai on the 1st day of the third month until Moses entered into the cloud on the 10th day of the third month. This would make Moses entering the cloud analogous to the resurrection of firstfruits, with Moses being a type of Christ Jesus, the First of the firstfruits. But Pentecost represents two baptisms, one by spirit and one by fire.

Baptism by fire is a euphemistic expression for resurrection to glory, when the mortal flesh puts on immortality so that it can pass through the fires separating the dimensions (i.e., the supra-dimensional heavenly realm from the physical creation). Baptism by spirit is a euphemistic expression for being empowered by or filled with the Holy Spirit, or in other words, “clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). Thus, instructions to Israel to consecrate themselves and to wash their garments before receiving the law on the third day becomes analogous to John the Baptist preaching repentance in preparing the way to the Lord, with the coming of the law and the Sinai marriage covenant being analogous to Jesus' seven years of ministry, half of which was as a physical human being in ancient Judea and half of which will be His ministry during the last three and a half years of the Tribulation (Rev 14:1–5). Therefore, the giving of the law on the 3rd day (or 4th day) of the third month to ancient Israel forms the shadow and copy of the second Passover liberation of Israel, when the Son of Man, Head and Body, will be revealed at the beginning of the seven endtime years of tribulation.

Death reigned from Adam to Moses (Rom 5:14), but with the giving of the law, Israel knew what sin was and what the cause for death was; for the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). With the giving of the law, Israel was made responsible for its lawlessness for before the law was given, sin was not counted as sin even though all died (Rom 5:13). An example of Israel being made responsible for its lawlessness is seen by comparing Exodus 16:27–30 with Numbers 15:32–36.

With the empowerment of disciples at the second Passover liberation of Israel, disciples will become responsible for their lawlessness, their sin. The Son of Man will be revealed; the garment of grace will be removed. Disciples will be liberated from indwelling sin and death so that no longer will weakness cause disciples to succumb to the lawlessness residing in the flesh. As Israel when breaking the Sabbath before the giving of the law at Sinai received a rebuking from God (but not the immediate execution of a death sentence), the Church when breaking the Sabbath before the second Passover liberation of Israel has not immediately died for this transgression of the law. But all of this will change with first the liberation of the Church (spiritual Israel) at the beginning of the seven endtime years of tribulation, then the liberation of the remaining third part of humankind at the middle of these seven endtime years. Once liberated from sin and death, every person will be responsible for his or her transgressions of the law, with the penalty for transgression being the second death.

Therefore, the reality of what is foreshadowed by the two symbolic baptisms (of spirit and of fire) on Pentecost is fulfilled during the seven endtime years of tribulation, with the reality of baptism of Israel by spirit beginning these seven years and the baptism by fire [i.e., the resurrection of firstfruits] ending these seven years. The harvest of firstfruits begins with the resurrection of Christ Jesus and continues until He returns to take to Him those who are His at the end of the Tribulation. Hence, the reality of both Pentecost and the Feast of Weeks moves into the reality represented by Unleavened Bread.

Christ Jesus is, ultimately, the substance or reality of every festival, new moon, and Sabbath (Col 2:16–17), which does not give a disciple excuse to neglect observing these festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths; for without observing these Sabbaths when disciples consciously enter into the presence of God, disciples will have no understanding of the plan of God and will say silly things about God.

The question remains, though, can a symbol represent more than one reality? Yes, it can. Thus, the Feast of Weeks can be legitimately construed to represent the great White Throne Judgment and the resurrection of the wheat harvest without excessively torturing the Holy Day calendar—such a representation will have both harvests of God represented in the spring Holy Day calendar [i.e., Passover through Pentecost] and both harvests of God represented in the fall calendar [Trumpets through the Last Great Day]. But this is not the best representation of the Feast of Weeks, nor the most logical representation.

It is difficult for a disciple who has spent decades believing that the Feast of Weeks represents the harvest of firstfruits (which it does) as a separate harvest from the Wave Sheaf Offering to perceive that the entirety of the harvest of firstfruits is represented by Unleavened Bread when the two loaves to be waved before the Lord on the Feast of Weeks are baked with leavening (Lev 23:17). But when remembering that the two millennia of the so-called Church era is represented by the six hours between when the Passover lamb is slain between the evenings and the midnight hour when the death angel passed over Egypt, it is not so difficult to understand why the two waved loaves are baked with leavening.

6.

In his first epistle, the Apostle John writes that disciples are to love one another, “for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God” (1 John 4:9) ... does John use “love” differently from how the concept is today commonly perceived? Paul wrote, “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ... For the mind set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot” (Rom 8:5, 7). Thus, it would seem that the person whose mind is set on the things of the flesh is not born of God and by extension, cannot either love God or brother, or know God.

For Paul, the person who does not submit to God’s law has his or her mind set on the flesh and cannot please God, does not love God, but remains subject to death—and John writes the same message: “And by this we know that we have come to know him [Jesus], if we keep his commandments. Whoever says ‘I know him’ but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected” (1 John 2:3-5). So the person who knows God will keep His commandments. The person who has been born of spirit is not hostile to God and will keep the law. Thus, those individuals who remain hostile to [opposed to] keeping the law (i.e., keeping the commandments) are not born of spirit but still have their minds set on the things of the flesh. These individuals cannot please God and do not even know

God, a brash statement considering that such individuals fill the pews of nearly every Christian church on Sunday mornings. And these individuals, often outwardly displaying great love for other “Christians,” have used Romans chapter 14 as their justification for continuing to live as they have always lived.

If God so loved us that He sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, “we ought to love one another” (1 John 4:11), for no one has ever seen God (*v.* 12) and how can we love what we have never seen when we cannot love those we do see? So John writes, “And this commandment we have from him [Jesus]: whoever loves God must also love his brother” (*v.* 21).

A disciple is his or her brother’s keeper ... does a disciple love his or her brother by watching him sally forth in sin without saying anything to him? James writes, “My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his [the one who wanders] soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins” (Jas 5:19–20).

But what if this sinner does not want to be returned into “the truth”? How much effort should be expended to bring the sinner back? Is there a qualifier to loving one’s brother that has been overlooked, especially considering the status of Christendom has changed greatly in the past nineteen hundred years?

The question must again be asked, but refined to a point: does a Sabbatarian disciple love his Christian brothers by watching them flagrantly transgress the commandments without saying anything to them? Or has the wolf growled at these Sabbatarians so many times that they fear to say anything, sitting instead on their hands with their mouth clamped tightly shut, pretending that if they leave those who worship on the 8th day alone, they will be left alone? Well, when the great falling away occurs, they won’t be left alone. They will be hunted as if they were beasts, slaughtered as so much livestock, and those doing the slaying will sincerely believe they do God a favor. So there is no reason to remain quiet, even when knowing that these Christian brothers are probably far less *Christian* than they pretend to be.

John wrote that we are to test the spirits, “for many false prophets have gone out into the world” (4:1) ... these many false prophets went out teaching that they were genuine *Christians* and John and those with him were false—

To determine genuine from false Christians and Christian teachers, the spirits must be tested. And for John, the test was whether the spirit confessed that Jesus had come in the flesh. But this was a 1st-Century test for which cheating spirits secured an answer sheet: the spirit animating Christendom orthodoxy goes to great length to stress that Jesus was fully man [i.e., He came in the flesh] and fully God [i.e., He came as God], thereby confessing that Jesus Christ came in the flesh and effectively negating John’s test of who is and isn’t of the antichrist³.

But if Jesus were fully God from birth, what happened when the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] descended upon Him as a dove? ... Keep this question in mind, for in its answer is the gospel that Paul taught.

Today, who denies that Jesus came in the flesh? Certainly Christian orthodoxy doesn’t seem to, nor do satellite theologies seem to. But when Jesus came to John the Baptist at the beginning of His ministry and told John that He needed to be baptized by John (Matt 3:13), John objected and said that he needed to be baptized by Jesus. Jesus countered with, “Let it [Him being baptized] be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness” (*v.* 15). So by Jesus’ testimony, His baptism by John was

³ Paul’s test of preaching the gospel free of charge, not even burdening the ones being taught when in need, with those who ask for tithes and donations being false apostles and deceitful workmen is a far more effective test and a much more difficult test to fake.

necessary to fulfill all righteousness, and Paul wrote, “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” (Rom 6:3–4).

Unless in *baptism* there is a comparison of apples to oranges, the baptism of disciples into Christ’s death would have Jesus’ baptism also be into His death when He took upon Himself the sins of Israel. However, between when Jesus was baptized and when His body would die three and a half years later was the entirety of His earthly ministry. Thus, Jesus’ earthly ministry was about what Paul writes in the sixth chapter of his treatise to the saints at Rome.

If disciples are baptized into Jesus’ death so that these disciples can walk in newness of life, what actually happens to disciples, for the fleshly bodies of disciples do not die as Jesus died at Calvary when the disciple is baptized?

If disciples are “buried with him by baptism into death,” the beginning and end of Jesus’ earthly ministry are compressed into the baptism of the disciple—with baptism always representing death, not birth by water—hence, Jesus’ baptism and receipt of the divine breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] becomes the pattern for, or type of the “old self” or “old man” being crucified with Jesus and a “new self” or “new man” resurrected to life “in a resurrection like his” (Rom 6:5–6), with the flesh actually putting on glory at the end of Jesus seven year ministry.

The flesh and blood body of Jesus is now analogous to a person’s old self or old nature [that which imparts *personhood*] that is crucified with Jesus “in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing” (Rom 6:6). Walking “in newness of life” doesn’t pertain to the future, when disciples receive glorified bodies, but pertains to the period immediately following baptism; so a person is resurrected from the dead without the physical body either dying or becoming immortal when “the Father raises the dead and gives them life” (John 5:21) “as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father (Rom 6:4). The theological juxtaposition is thus:

- Jesus’ physical body is a type or representation of the “human nature” received from God that enlivens every human being, the nature which King Nebuchadnezzar had taken from him for the seven years when he received from God the nature of an ox (Dan chap 4).
- Baptism is unto the death of this human nature that has been consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32) because of the transgression of the first Adam.
- Because Jesus’ father was not the first Adam, but *the Logos/Theos*, Jesus was born “free,” and not in bondage to disobedience; thus, He was born free to keep the commandments of God. But is not the case with any person whose father, however generations removed, is the first Adam.
- Because a person’s human nature is baptized into Jesus’ death, and buried in a death like Jesus’, “the personhood” of the individual is raised from death by the Father (John 5:21) as the Father raised Jesus from the dead—raised so that this new personhood can walk in newness of life, not enslaved to sin.
- A person is raised from the dead [resurrected] and from a death like Jesus’ when the person receives a second birth, a second life (John 3:5–8) through receipt of the divine breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] as Jesus received a second life when He was raised from baptism and the breath of God descended upon Him as a dove.

A shadow or type of a spiritual thing is the mirror image of the spiritual thing in one less dimension than the spiritual thing ... Paul argues that this physical realm reveals the things of God (Rom 1:20), but it does this by forming the left hand image of the right hand of God. When Jesus was glorified He sat down at the right hand of the Father (Heb

10:12 *et al*). Disciples, when born of spirit, should form the left hand image of Christ Jesus, walking as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6), imitating Paul as he imitated Jesus (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17)—“image” used because it is not the flesh of the disciple that dies at baptism or is crucified with Jesus or is raised from the dead “by the glory of the Father” (Rom 6:4). It is the inner human nature that activates the flesh that is raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. Jesus’ flesh and blood body existed in one less dimension that does this inner human nature, received initially from God as a life force that causes a human being to be a human being and a cat to be a cat, in addition to causing the lungs to breathe and the heart to pump. It exists at a more primordial level than “instinct,” or “reasoning,” both manifestations of this inner self.

The inner creature or old nature is, again, the nature that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from him in an instant. It comes from God and returns to God, and it is not an immortal soul although ancient Greek philosophers taught that it was. Rather, it is the nature of the great predators that will be changed when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh (Isa 11:6-9). It is the nature that will be taken from the lion-appearing first king of Daniel chapter 7 when this spirit being has its wings plucked off and is lifted up and made to stand as a man and is given the mind of a man. Some cutting edge research has been presented at Loma Linda University showing certain chemicals produce in this “nature” a desire to know God or to seek God; so this nature does not exist separate from the flesh, but is united with the flesh by the creation process and would seem to have entered the first Adam when *Elohim* [singular in usage] breathed into the nostrils of the man of mud.

As a person’s shadow lies to the side of a person that is farthest away from the light, and as the shadow of a three-dimensional person exists in two dimensions only, the shadow and copy of a heavenly thing occurs in this earthly realm, which will make Jesus’ first three and a half years of ministry the shadow and copy of His endtime ministry when He, as the glorified Son, will again deliver the Father’s words. The interruption in this ministry occurs from the death of His body, His physical body at Calvary and His spiritual Body. The resurrection of his physical body occurred after three days; the resurrection of His spiritual Body will occur after the third day. As the gates of Hades did not prevail over Jesus’ physical body which saw no corruption, the gates of Hades will not prevail over His spiritual Body that also will not see any corruption when it is returned to life: today, though, Christendom is a stinking corpse, divided, without life and in dire need of resurrection. The dark portion of the fourth day transpired before Jesus ascended to His Father (John 20:17); the dark portion of the fourth day will see the saints delivered up to tribulation before the light comes and the saints are glorified. Jesus as the Head of the Son of Man died and was resurrected to glory; the saints as the Body of Christ (of the Son of Man) will likewise die and be resurrected to glory, with this glory not coming from the Father who gave life to the saints when they were crucified with Christ but from the Son to whom all judgment has been given (John 5:21–22) and who will give life to whom He will through causing the mortal flesh to put on immortality.

Within the single verse of John 5:21 is all of Christendom’s history, beginning with the Father raising disciples from the dead as Jesus was raised from the dead (Rom 6:4) to the Son giving life to whom He will by causing the perishable flesh of disciples to put on imperishability as His flesh put on immortality when He ascended to the Father.

If the flesh and blood body of the man Jesus is the shadow of the inner creature or nature that enlivens the flesh—the inner self that is baptized into His death and raised up by the Father through the Father giving life to disciple by receipt of His divine breath (again, John 5:21)—then the man Jesus had to have come in the flesh, and had to have

come without spiritual life until after baptized when the divine breath of the Father descended upon Him as a dove. He could not form the shadow otherwise.

John's baptism was unto repentance, or the death of lawlessness and resurrection into newness of life that would have the person living without sin, but living as a mortal human being with no eternal life dwelling within the person. John's objection to baptizing Jesus stemmed from Jesus being without sin; Jesus had no need to repent. He had no need to walk in a *newness of life*, for He already walked without sin. Again, His father was not the first Adam, but *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος]; so Jesus was not born consigned [or concluded] to sin as a bondservant of the Adversary. To borrow the terminology of Christian orthodoxy, Jesus was born without *original sin*. Hence, as a flesh and blood human being, Jesus was born free to keep the laws of God and was without condemnation; He was born free to keep the commandments even though He was tempted in all things as other men [and women] were. And He had kept the commandments as John knew that He had.

Rejection or failure to comprehend the Hebraic teaching that human beings must inherit eternal life (*cf.* Luke 10:25; 18:18) and do not have inherent indwelling eternal life in the form of an immortal soul hindered or outright prevented Greek theologians from understanding what occurred when the breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] descended upon Jesus as a dove (Matt 3:16) ... if Jesus were born of Mary as the only Son of *the Logos* who was *Theos* (John 1:1, 14; 3:16) and was with *the Theon* [τὸν θεόν] in the beginning, the claim of the Apostle John, then Jesus had no life of any sort that came from *the Theon* [τὸν θεόν or the Father] prior to receiving the divine breath of the Father when it descended upon Him as a dove—and only after receiving life from the divine breath of the Father does the Father call Jesus His beloved Son (Matt 3:17).

The “Holy Spirit” by which Mary conceived [“γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου—*having been conceived from spirit is holy*, or *having been conceived from spirit that is holy* (Matt 1:20)] was not the divine breath of the Father or a third personage of a triune deity, but the “breath” of *the Logos/Theos* who entered His creation as His only Son.

In order for Jesus to be fully God prior to the divine breath of the Father descending upon Him, *the Logos/Theos* could not have come as His son, but as Himself ... the argument that has Jesus being fully man and fully God makes Jesus into a mutant that is neither man nor God, but a hybrid creature of another biological phylum, a *Janus* with two faces, one composed of “spirit” and one composed of flesh, a gatekeeper that looks into both heaven and hell, and not a man like other men, with a human nature like other men's, differing only in that it was not consigned to disobedience from birth but was free to choose whether or not to obey God—

The Apostle John's testimony is that *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος] was God [θεός], and that this *Logos* became flesh and dwelt among men: “Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν” (1:14). “This one—οὗτος,” this *Logos*, was in the beginning with *the Theon* [τὸν θεόν] ... structurally, John separates *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος], a masculine singular noun in nominative case, from *the Theon* [τὸν θεόν], a masculine singular noun in accusative case (based on the article), an imbedded separation inherent in the plural Hebrew icon used for “God” [*Elohim*]. John further states that *the Logos* became flesh, became God in the form of flesh—and if we stopped here, the One whom *the Logos* was with [that is τὸν θεόν] has neither a Son, nor has entered the creation Himself. The separateness that John establishes between *the Logos/Theos* [ὁ λόγος/θεός] and *the Theon* [τὸν θεόν] in the first two sentences of his gospel absolutely prevents *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος] from entering His creation as the son of *the Theon* [τὸν θεόν], which is what makes the Trinity an unexplainable mystery for the inherent plurality of *Elohim* is not present in a Greek masculine singular noun.

How could a Greek speaker convey both the “oneness” of God and the plurality of the Hebrew icons used for God without establishing a pantheon like that which Greeks had outwardly worshipped for a millennium and without doing serious damage to monotheism? Jesus came to reveal the Father to His disciples (John 17:25-26), with the Father not previously known in this world, and by extension, not known by Israel. Truly, the Father was the *Unknown God* that had been worshiped in ignorance by Israel.

What John writes when he says that “every spirit [πνεῦμα] that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God [ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ]” isn’t an affirmation that angels coming from *the God* confess that Jesus came in the flesh whereas angels coming from the antichrist do not so confess. Rather, every “breath” that confesses would seem to mean “every spoken word by a disciple who has been born of spirit” — note: in his gospel, Matthew does not use an article for either πνεῦμα or for θεοῦ in 3:16, whereas both definite articles are present in 1 John 4:2. Matthew’s reason for omitting the articles, added by later scribes and so noted by brackets, apparently stems from the breath of God descending as a dove not being a definite or one time occurrence—in Greek, the definite article is omitted when a noun is not used in a definite sense—but being the pattern or type of fulfilling all righteousness, meaning that every disciple will receive the breath of God in a similar manner.

Grammatically, if the two Greek nouns (πνεῦμα and θεοῦ) were “definite,” the definite article would need to be present as it is in, “τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ” (1 John 4:2) so Matthew uses “πνεῦμα θεοῦ” as two non-definite nouns, which now circles back to Jesus being a man like any other man and He receive the breath of God as any other man would receive the breath of God. And if Jesus were a man like any other man, He was not fully God from birth. And as a type that fulfills all righteousness, he would have come in the flesh only.

The world listens to those who are from the world, who are of the antichrist, but only those who are of God [i.e., born of spirit as Jesus received the breath of God] listen to genuine disciples such as John. And listening or not listening to John determines who knows “the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error—τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πλάνης” (1 John 4:6). Although translators make a distinction between one “τὸ πνεῦμα” and the other “τὸ πνεῦμα” by stylistically identifying “the spirit of truth” as the Holy Spirit, John does not distinguish one breath from the other breath except as to what is uttered by the particular “breath—πνεῦμα,” with the one uttering truth and the other error; so for John, from one pool of disciples comes some disciples who hear the words of the John, Peter, Paul, and from this same pool comes a great many more disciples who are from this world and heard by this world and have gone out from those who are genuine for they were never of those who are genuine (1 John 2:19).

The difficulties caused by transcribing an inherently and structurally plural noun in Hebrew [*Elohim*] as a masculine singular noun in Greek created a separation of “Christians” by which endtime disciples can determine who is of Christ and who is of the antichrist, the spirit of this world, with those on all sides identifying those on another side as false ... is this not an apt description of today’s Christian Church?

The inherent plurality of *Elohim* is manifested when comparing familiar quotations of Jesus:

For God [ὁ θεὸς] so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16–17)

For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment

to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father.
(John 5:21–23)

Who judges the world? Paul writes, “God judges those outside [the Church]” (1 Cor 5:13), and Peter writes, “For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God” (1 Pet 4:17). So there is judgment, and it would seem that the Father has given this responsibility to the Son, who said not to be surprised when those who have done good are resurrected to life and those who have done evil are resurrected to condemnation or judgment (John 5:28–29).

If *the Theos* [ὁ θεὸς] did not send His only Son into the world to condemn it, then who did send Jesus into the world to judge it? The answer is, the Father sent Jesus into the world to judge it ... but Jesus told Pharisees, “Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father” (John 5:45), and there is no reason for Jesus to bring accusations against the Pharisees. The Father had already given all judgment to Jesus, and Moses stood as the accuser of the Pharisees and of every other Israelite, physically or spiritually circumcised.

The Father, by deferring all judgment to the Son, neither condemns the world nor saves the world. It was *the Logos/Theos* who sent His only Son, the man Jesus of Nazareth, into the world that the world might be saved through Him.

The Apostle John adds, “No one has ever seen God—θεὸν οὐδεὶς πώποτε τεθέαται” (1 John 4:12); yet when Philip said to Jesus, “Lord, show us the Father and it is enough for us,” Jesus said, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, “Show us the Father”? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me” (John 14:8–10).

Once the breath of the Father descended upon Jesus as a dove, the Father was in Jesus as an indwelling breath of life in a manner analogous to a person’s human nature being in the person. The mechanics of how Jesus was in the Father are more difficult to explain, but comprehensible through realizing the life Jesus had came from the Father so the Father “encompassed” Jesus, thereby causing Jesus to be within the Father ... once the breath of the Father had descended upon Jesus, Jesus’ human nature, coming from *the Logos* being His first father, was replaced or overwritten by the nature of the Father so that Jesus’ words were the Father’s words (John 14:10–11).

In a like manner, when a person is born of spirit—that is, receives life through the indwelling of the breath of the Father—the person’s human nature should be overwritten by the Father; thus, the person should walk in a newness of life, having love for one another. Note: “should” ... too often what is seen within Christendom is disciples actively practicing sinning, and John writes, “Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. ... Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil” (1 John 3:4, 8). And out of love for one’s brothers, Sabbatarian disciples are really under obligation to try and return lawless disciples back to the truth, a task made more difficult by instructions not to cast pearls before swine—are 8th-day Christians swine? If they are not, then the obligation remains to lead, if possible, lawless disciples into the truth.

John’s testimony is that *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος] entered His creation as His only begotten Son (*cf.* John 1:1–3, 14; 3:16), that “this one” [ὁ λόγος] was, in the beginning, with *the God* [τὸν θεόν], and was Himself, God [θεὸς]. To Trinitarians, the structural separation incorporated within “with—πρὸς” does not produce two entities, but two manifestations of a single triune deity. To Unitarians, *the Logos* is no more of an entity than is a word spoken by a person; thus, Unitarians hold that as God spoke all that is into existence, He also spoke the man Jesus into existence within the womb of Mary, thereby explaining how it came to be that Mary was impregnated by the Holy Spirit, the divine breath of God and the vehicle by which God spoke the creation into existence.

Whereas Trinitarians teaching that Jesus came as fully man and as fully God do a dance of deceit to covertly get around what John wrote about testing spirits (no one wants to be so easily identified as false), Unitarians definitively teach that Jesus not only came as a man [*an Adoni*] but that he remained a man until He ascended to the Father to be glorified. But here is where Unitarians step into a logical fault unless Paul's epistles are ignored: if Jesus is a man descended from the first Adam, then He was born consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32) and as such He could not live without sin. He would have been under obligation, as the servant of disobedience, to sin. Therefore, if Jesus' Father was not of the house of God and was not the creator of all that has been made—if Jesus' Father were not *Theos*—then Jesus could not have lived without sin but would have needed a covering for sin such as an animal sacrifice until the “anointed one” came.

The teachings of both Trinitarian and of Arian Christians are false—when the spirits are tested, what is found is the presently dead Body of Christ [dead through separation from Christ] that has many, many disciples looking at the physical things of this world (i.e., those things that pertain to the flesh) as if they were spiritual things, not realizing that what they are seeing is shadows and mirror images of living realities in the supra-dimensional heavenly realm. And unfortunately, as all but a handful left the Apostle Paul because they could not understand his gospel, and as all but the women and John left Jesus because they didn't want identified with Him, all but a few will not today use the periscope of typology to peer into the heavenly realm but will stay wallowing in the mud from which the things of the flesh come

7.

In addition to the spiritual reality of *Yom Kipporim* [the day of plural (two) coverings] being represented by Calvary [the location used metonymically], disciples have now also entered into the spiritual reality of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, that period when leavening equates to sin: when disciples put on the garment of Christ (Gal 3:27), they cover themselves with the righteousness of Christ, the spiritual reality of the Azazel goat. Because they are “covered” by this garment of Grace, no sin is imputed to disciples: they live without sin as an Israelite lives without leavened bread for seven days each year. Grace is not unmerited pardon from sins committed by born again disciples after their spiritual birth, but the covering of these sins after the type of the Azazel goat who had the sins of Israel read over its head, then was led into the wilderness by the hand of a fit man.

Jesus' death at Calvary, the reality of the goat sacrificed on the altar, covered the sins committed by every Israelite prior to Israelites being born of Spirit. The resurrected Jesus, the reality of the Azazel goat, covers but does not pay the death penalty for the sins committed by born of Spirit Israelites in the heavenly realm where those who have been born from above have actual life as the earnest [as in *earnest* money] of glorification. When judgments are revealed, those sins that Jesus has “covered” will be either given to Satan, their rightful owner, or returned to the disciple who has done evil (committed blasphemy against the Holy Spirit), with this disciple now being cast into the lake of fire. But Satan will not be cast into the lake of fire at the Second Advent, but bound in the bottomless pit for a thousand years; so as the lives of livestock were given to cover ancient Israel's sins until Christ Jesus took those sins upon Himself at Calvary, the lives of spiritual livestock will be given until Satan dies when fire comes from his belly to utterly consume him. And the need for *spiritual livestock* to be sacrificed as vessels of wrath prepared for destruction (Rom 9:22) should frighten every lawless Christian, for these vessels of wrath are sculpted from the same lump of clay as are the vessels of mercy prepared beforehand for glory.

Because disciples today live as one of two sons of promise—Esau or Jacob—both still in the womb of Grace, with one son hated and one son loved even though no sin is presently imputed to either, the disciple who consciously practices lawlessness is the hated son, with the falsely pious disciple’s primary display of lawlessness being the day on which he or she attempts to enter into God’s rest.

The disciple who commits blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is not cast into the lake of fire today, but cast in when judgments are revealed. Therefore, this lawless disciple is today a vessel of wrath prepared for destruction but endured with much patience so God, “desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power” (again, Rom 9:22), has sacrificed to be slain at the dedication of His house when He makes “known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory” (v. 23).

Every disciple is today in one of three categories:

1. The disciple who keeps the commandments and teaches them to others will be called great in the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:19).
2. The disciple who relaxes (not breaks) the least of the commandments and teaches others to do likewise will be called least in the kingdom (also Matt 5:19).
3. Those who teach disciples to be lawless [*anomians*—ἀνομίαν] will be denied by Jesus when judgments are revealed regardless of the great works done in Jesus’ name (Matt 7:21–23). This disciple is a hypocrite, for he or she knew to keep the law but did not because of unbelief.

So the basic premise of those within the Adventist church who would have disciples ignore the high Sabbaths of God is false: the spiritual realities of these high days are not separated by time, which itself is confined to this physical creation, but are merged together into one period when the 10th of the seventh month is like the 10th of the first month, the day on which the Passover Lamb is selected and penned. Jesus is the Passover Lamb of God. *The cup* is His blood that is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins (Matt 26:28). He intercedes with the Father on the behalf of His disciples, whose sins He covers with His righteousness. And genuine disciples have not ceased and will not cease taking the Passover sacraments of bread and wine on the night Jesus was betrayed until they are with Christ in the Father’s kingdom.

The 15th of the seventh month is now like the 15th of the first month, something the prophet Ezekiel reveals: “In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month and for seven days of the feast, he [the prince] shall make the same provision [as in the first month — vv. 21–24] for sin offerings, burnt offerings, and grain offerings, and for the oil” (45:25).

Plus, the Holy Spirit will be poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28) in a manner foreshadowed by “a sound like a mighty rushing wind” (Acts 2:2) filling the house on the day of Pentecost that followed Calvary. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit will occur when the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Father and His Christ (Rev 11:15–18; Dan 7:13–14). The spiritual reality of Pentecost moves inside the seven endtime years of tribulation that are represented by the seven days of Unleavened Bread, and by the seven days of Sukkoth when disciples live in temporary booths that are analogous to the tents of flesh in which the new creature, born of Spirit, today dwells.

In 1972, when the younger minister said, “Your feasts,” I did not understand exactly how important keeping the high Sabbaths were, but I was willing to believe God ... the natural mind is hostile to God, and will not, indeed cannot keep the commandments (Rom 8:7), especially the Sabbath as evidenced by all of those things that are done on the Sabbath, the busiest shopping day of the week. For me, keeping the Sabbath meant no more hunting on opening day of deer season. I had that year, with a rifle of my construction, killed a large mule deer buck opening day, and had a chance at a possible

record-book buck. I was already making plans for the following (1973) hunting season, but the Feast of Tabernacles would occur during the same week as Oregon's shortened mule deer season. For me, keeping the Sabbath changed how I lived. Keeping the Sabbath required that I put God first in everything I did. Eventually, it meant putting God first in everything I thought. The strength of the first of the great commandments, to love God with all your heart and with all your mind, lies in keeping the Sabbath in a culture that is organized around celebration of another day.

The world is the product of the natural mind, which is not really *natural*, but has been acquired from the broadcast of the prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2). Human nature as presently perceived is the nature of the Adversary ... human nature is a received nature as evidenced by Nebuchadnezzar being given the mind of a beast for seven years. He didn't know that he was the king mentally imprisoned as an ox. Rather, he grazed as an ox while thinking like one. Plus, when the Holy Spirit is poured out upon all flesh, the *natural* natures of the great predators will change and the lion will lie down with the lamb (Isa 11:6–9). The *naturalness* of humanity's nature will likewise change once Satan is cast from heaven and is no longer able to broadcast disobedience as the prince of the power of the air.

My nature changed, not so suddenly that I was at first aware of the change. But after two years, I could clearly perceive that my thoughts were not what they had been.

The older minister who had broken the rifle stock over the little buck's head brought me the gun on their second visit. Both ministers promised to return in another month. And I set about, as best I could, to prove the Bible true or false. What I found in that month was what others had found before me: the Bible held up to every test I imposed upon it. I also found, as I had before, that it didn't say what the majority of Christians says it does. I wasn't of this majority's reading community. I was of a very small community then identified as part of the cultic fringe to the mainstream Christian movement. But that I read the text like few other Christians wasn't particularly troubling. Nor is it troubling that I now read the text as even fewer Christians do.

In an odd sort of way, my Dad, also Homer Kizer, was a type of my "old nature" crucified with Christ.

8.

The Vision of Obadiah

For the day of the Lord is near upon all nations. / As you have done, it shall be done to you; / your deeds shall return on your own head. / For as you have drunk on my holy mountain, / so all the nations shall drink continually; / they shall drink and swallow, / and shall be as though they had never been. / But in Mount Zion there shall be those who escape, / and it shall be holy, / and the house of Judah shall possess their own possessions. (Obadiah 15–17)

In 2004, four men jointly purchased real property at Port Austin, Michigan, in the name of a sacred purpose trust: Port Austin Sabbatarian Church Community (PASCC). These four all claimed belief in the necessity of keeping the commandments of God, but when one of the four found that he could not get along with the other three, he filed a revised Purchasing Agreement in a similar sounding name of a trust—Port Austin Sabbatarian Church Community Sacred Purpose Trust (PASCSSPT)—with himself as its sole trustee. With a few strokes of a pen, Norman Scott Edwards eliminated Terry Monte Williams,

Paul Douglas Drieman, and Philip Daniel Frankford from any ownership position in the real property having a contracted value of \$670,000.

Edwards' theft of the property—he filed the revised Purchasing Agreement that eliminated the other three on 17 September 2004, but neglected to tell the three until 29 October 2004—has served as a schism to divide the Sabbatarian community as little else has: Edwards has supporters who see nothing amiss in his elimination of Williams, Drieman, and Frankford. Apparently the position that Edwards' supporters take is that if he could do so, why not? Others Sabbatarian disciples, though, have a problem with Edwards' acts, and have marked Edwards as a person to be avoided; as a person with whom a genuine disciple shall not eat or have any fellowship.

The schism formed because of Edwards' theft and subsequent marking is akin to the schism that caused Jacob Amman's followers to separate from more liberal Mennonites in the late 17th-Century. And here is where understanding the vision of Obadiah begins.

The Apostle Paul writing to Gentile converts at Rome says that Abraham's offspring shall be named through Isaac (9:7), not through Ishmael or through the sons of Keturah, the sons of bondwomen born by the natural process of a man having his way with a woman. Rather, Isaac was a son of promise: God caused Isaac's birth by bringing fertility to a long dead womb, thereby making Isaac the shadow and copy of disciples born of Spirit by promise and not through the processes of the flesh.

In his juxtaposition of spirit and flesh, Paul writes, "Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise" (Gal 4:28). Paul further writes, "But just as at that time [in the days of Abraham] he who was born according to the flesh [Ishmael] *persecuted* him who was born according to the Spirit [Isaac], so also it is now. But what does the Scripture say? 'Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.' So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman" (*vv.* 29–31 emphasis added).

Ishmael as a teenager did not "persecute" the weaned child Isaac (Gen 21:8–10) as English speakers understand the word. Rather, Ishmael laughed at, or sported with Isaac, as any teenager might with a child, who could well have been five years old, thereby making Ishmael as old as nineteen. But the Jews of Paul's day were not merely laughing at or sporting with converts to the sect of the Nazarenes; rather, they were killing them as Paul well knew. So Paul read the account of Ishmael laughing at Isaac not in a "literal" way, but as a metaphoric way that would have mocking equating to murdering a person as Jesus equated anger to murder (Matt 5:21–22).

According to Paul's understanding of figurative language, disciples in the 1st-Century and since have been the spiritual reality foreshadowed by the patriarch Isaac. In this analogy, Ishmael, who dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, represents physically circumcised Israel; for it was in the wilderness of Paran where Israel believed the ten spies rather than God (Num 12:16–14:45) and thereby refused to enter the Promised Land when the promise of entering stood (Heb 4:1). So bondage and disbelief are linked in the person of Ishmael, and since God consigned all of humankind to disbelief, death, and disobedience (Rom 11:32) because of the transgression of the first Adam, Ishmael and the kingdom of the Midianites (descendants of Ishmael) also represent humankind prior to being born of Spirit.

Note the above: with the exception of Jesus of Nazareth whose Father was *Theos* (John 3:16), all of humankind since Adam's transgression has been born consigned to disobedience because their father was the first Adam, and as such, all human beings are born as sons of disobedience (Eph 2:2–3). This includes the natural nation of Israel, which forms a type and a representation of every pious person who seeks to have a relationship with God prior to be born of spirit. And as Israel was liberated from physical bondage to a human king at the first Passover, Israel will be liberated from spiritual

bondage to a spiritual king (Isa 14:4–20) at the second Passover, when the lives of men are again given for Israel (Isa 43:3–4). Therefore, Ishmael serves as a type of natural Israel, what Paul understood but what has not been well understood since.

There was, however, only one son of promise born to Abraham, not many: there is only one spiritual Body of Christ, a Body without division (1 Co 12:25), not many bodies or many divisions formed by schisms of the one Body. So as Jesus' physical body, crucified at Calvary, died and was buried in the Garden Tomb only to be raised from the dead after three days, His spiritual Body, crucified with Him, also died and was buried in Eden and now awaits resurrection after *the third day*.

Resurrection from death is a continuation of life that is not a continuation, a seemingly contradictory statement that is seen in analogy through one generation of human beings producing another generation: Isaac as the single son of promise produces offspring by promise (Gen 25:21). Hence, Esau and Jacob are the continuation of Isaac as the *son of promise*.

A carnal son of disobedience who receives a second birth through receipt of the Holy Spirit becomes part of spiritual Isaac. This is what Paul taught. Thus, the new creature that is spirit dwelling in a tent of flesh (together, the new creature and its tent of flesh) form what is outwardly perceived as a disciple of Christ Jesus. The new creature is born free to keep the commandments of God (Rom 8:1–2; 6:14), but the tent of flesh remains consigned to disobedience as Paul found out but did not like (Rom 7:21–25). Therefore, a war is created within the person with the law of God imbedded in the mind and written on the heart contesting for control of the tent of flesh in which the law of sin and death continues to reign. Not until this person is liberated from indwelling sin and death at the second Passover will the person truly be free from sin.

The new creature that has been born of spirit continues to dwell in a tent of flesh, but continues as Esau and Jacob are continuations of Isaac. This new creature has not yet been resurrected in glorify [i.e., the perishable flesh having put on imperishability] to become a spirit being that is a younger sibling of Christ Jesus (Rom 8:29). But an intermediary step between being part of spiritual Isaac and glorification exists for endtime disciples: since the spiritual Body of Christ died with the first disciples, who were personally taught by Jesus and had need of no other teacher (1 John 2:21), the need to restore all things by the last Elijah now exists (Matt 17:11), with John the Baptist being a type of this last Elijah. This restoration of all things includes resurrecting the Body to, first, empowered spiritual life in tents of flesh, then to glorification of the flesh.

When a disciple is “filled” with the Holy Spirit, there is neither indwelling sin nor death within the disciple. Literally, the disciple will not die from so-called natural causes, but must be slain by another. And because the liberated disciple will no longer have sin dwelling within him or herself, the disciple must take on the sins of others to die: the disciple becomes the Body of Christ, the Lamb of God sacrificed at Calvary.

Both the head and body of the paschal lamb dies when sacrificed.

Evidence that disciples are not today “filled” with the Holy Spirit is their physical deaths.

If disciples truly form the Body of Christ, the Body of the Son of Man, the Body of the Lamb of God, then disciples can expect to be sacrificed as Jesus was, for the disciple is not above his or her teacher, nor a servant above his or her master (Matt 10:24). It is enough for a disciple to be like his or her teacher and a servant to be like his or her master (*v. 25*).

Hence, the person who has been liberated from indwelling sin and death no longer is within the womb of Grace, but has been revealed as the Body of the Son of Man (Luke 17:30). The garment of Christ's righteousness has been stripped away by liberation from

indwelling sin and death, and the disciple who was of spiritual Isaac a day before will become part of children Zion brings forth in a day.

Quoting the Lord, the prophet Isaiah writes, “Before she was in labor she gave birth; / before her pain came upon her she delivered a son. / Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such a thing? / Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be brought forth in one moment? / For as soon as Zion was in labor she brought forth her children” (66:7–8) ... the pain that will come upon Zion is the Tribulation, and the son Zion delivers is the *son of promise* that will become one with the glorified Christ through marriage.

Prior to Zion bringing forth her children in a day, all disciples who are born of Spirit are one with Christ through being His covered [by Grace] Body. They are spiritual Isaac. But in his treatise to the saints at Rome, the Apostle Paul, after saying that Abraham’s offspring shall be named through Isaac (9:7–9), adds, “And not only so, but also when Rebecca had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of his call—she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ As it is written, ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated’” (*vv.* 10–13).

In the womb of Rebekah were two sons of promise who would be born in a day: the Lord [YHWH] told Rebekah, “Two nations are in your womb, / and two people from within you [from birth] shall be divided; / the one shall be stronger than the other, / the older shall serve the younger” (Gen 25:23).

The younger son, Jacob, wrestles with God and will not let God go until he receives a blessing: “Then he said, ‘Let me go, for the day has broken.’ But Jacob said, ‘I will not let you go unless you bless me.’ And he said to him, ‘What is your name?’ And he said, ‘Jacob.’ Then he said, ‘Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.’ Then Jacob asked him, ‘Please tell me your name.’ But he said, ‘Why is it that you ask my name?’ And there he blessed him” (Gen 32:26–29). Striving with God and living to tell about it is the blessing (*v.* 30) Jacob received, a blessing that is revealed in the name “Israel.”

Israel begins as one man who strives with God and prevails, but becomes the twelve tribes that descend from twelve sons. These tribes formed one nation that with the exception of Joshua, died in the wilderness because of unbelief [Caleb was an adopted son of Israel; he was of Esau]. The mixed circumcised and uncircumcised children of this nation crossed the Jordan, where through transgression of the law and profaning the Sabbaths of God, they divided into two nations after Solomon’s death—and from the remnant of the tribe God retained for the sake of King David comes by one man, Jesus of Nazareth, the spiritual nation of Israel, circumcised of heart by the Spirit (Deut 30:6; Rom 2:28–29; Col 2:11), this circumcision not of the flesh by the work of human hands. But Paul identifies this spiritual nation as Isaac, so Israel remains a generation away; remains as one of the two nations in the womb of Rebecca, with, again, this womb of Rebecca being Grace.

Zion shall bring forth a spiritual nation of Esau, and a second spiritual nation, that of Jacob which will have to wrestle with God and prevail during the great pain of childbirth that, in this case, follows birth and precedes it. This pain of childbirth is the Tribulation, which begins with the second Passover liberation of Israel; hence, it follows the resurrection of the Body of Christ back to life. But the Tribulation also precedes the sons of God being glorified at the return of Christ Jesus.

What’s seen is that a son of disobedience (akin to Abraham’s natural son Ishmael) receives a second birth through receipt of the Holy Spirit to become a disciple of Christ Jesus. This second birth makes the former son of disobedience like Abraham’s son of

promise, Isaac. Thus, the disciple who died in the 1st-Century formed the living but nailed to the cross Body of Christ—this disciple should not have needed a teacher, for as John writes, “But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you have knowledge. I [John] write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth” (1 John 2:20–21). Under the new covenant, “[T]hey shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ / for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest” (Heb 8:11). Therefore, if disciples are under the new covenant, then all have knowledge and there is no need for anyone to teach neighbor or brother to *Know the Lord*.

But the reality of the 1st-Century CE was that disciples were in need of instruction, and most of the instruction was contrary to the gospel that Paul taught; thus, while he still lived, all in Asia turned away from Paul (2 Tim 1:15). Paul wrote elsewhere, “For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things” (Phil 3:18–19).

The proof of anything is in the reality presented by the thing: in the 1st-Century, within the womb of Grace were two peoples, one of which was a people of the field or flesh, with their end being destruction. The other was a people that had to wrestle with God and prevail ... the blessing Jacob received was in wrestling with God and living to tell about the experience. The blessing those disciples who are of Israel receives is wrestling with God and living through glorification to tell about it.

Israel is a spiritual nation [i.e., circumcised by spirit]. And since this is true, Esau is, at the end of the age, also a spiritual nation, but one that is hated by God even before it is born in a day.

The physical descendants of Esau became Edom, the nation that dwelt on Mount Seir. Therefore, when the prophet Obadiah wrote, “For the day of the Lord is near upon all nations” (v. 15), the timeframe for the prophet’s declarations against Edom wasn’t seven, eight, nine centuries before the common era, but in the near future when Edom is one of two sons of promise in the womb of a spiritual Rebekah.

Christendom is presently divided by the writings of Moses. On one side of this schism is all who are Esau, hated by God but today still covered by Grace. On the other side is all who are loved by God even though covered by Grace. What is the difference? What separates the one who is hated from the one who is loved, and this question should concern all of spiritual Isaac, for all who are Isaac will become either spiritual Esau or Israel when the Tribulation begins.

Jacob wrestles with God: how is a disciple to wrestle with God? Surely no one who is physical expects to prevail over what cannot be seen, or is not of these four unfurled dimensions. Therefore, wrestling with God can only be accomplished by wrestling with obedience to God; i.e., commandment keeping. And this is where Moses enters the fight.

Jesus said that if an Israelite believed Moses, the person would believe Him, for Moses wrote of Him. “But if you do not believe his [Moses’] writings, how will you believe my [Jesus’] words” (again, John 5:47). Yet visible Christendom rejects Moses and actually uses rejection of Moses as the determiner of whom should be identified as a “Christian.” Thus, the disciple who wrestles with God will believe Jesus’ words by believing Moses’ writings, which puts this disciple at odds with the visible Church, thereby causing this disciple to fight against what is accepted as *Christian* while knowing within the person that he or she is genuine whereas those with whom he or she contends are not. Wrestling with God morphs into wrestling for God against disobedience and lawlessness.

Today, disciples compose spiritual Isaac, in whose womb (Rebekah’s womb is Isaac’s womb) are two sons, one hated and one loved, with the prophecies against the hated son

having this son utterly destroyed to the person. Disciples will not enter the heavenly realm as they are today. The flesh will perish. The new creature that has been born of Spirit—this new creature being likened to the next generation of a human family—will receive a new body that is composed of spirit, a body that is like the person's present body in form but not in substance. This new creature is today either hated by God or loved even though no sin is imputed to this new creature because it remains covered by Grace, or in the womb of Grace.

Sin separates man from God, and causes man to hide from God as in the case of the first Adam hiding in the garden (Gen 3:10). Sin does not separate God from man although sin causes God to hide His face from man (Deut 32:20) so that man cannot find God, but sin *per se* does not separate God from man. If it did, then *Theos* would not have entered His creation as His only Son to die at Calvary by taking on the sins of Israel. So it is not the presence or absence of a sin or sins that causes one son to be hated and another loved. Rather, it is the person's attitude toward sin.

The above should not pass by quickly: both the son that is loved as well as the son that is hated will, today, prior to liberation from indwelling sin and death, commit sin. All sin and come short of the glory [righteousness] of God. But the person who truly hates sin is loved by God; whereas the person who is not appalled by sin is hated by God.

Jacob becomes Israel through wrestling with God, and Israel becomes a spiritual nation consisting of all who have circumcised hearts, not of all who identify themselves as Christians. Esau neither wrestles with God nor receives a circumcised heart on which are written the laws of God even though Esau is also *a son of promise* and spiritually born from above. But an eight day gap occurred in the physical type that forms the shadow of spiritual birth: a Hebrew male was not circumcised on the day of his birth, but on the eighth day. The disciple who is born of spirit does not receive a circumcised heart when he or she is born of spirit, but after a journey of faith is undertaken that cleanses the heart, a journey that is equivalent to Abraham's physical journey of faith. And this journey of faith determines whether a person is Israel or Esau.

Esau was born as the son of promise that bore his own bloody hair coat (Gen 25:25); endtime Esau consists of those "Christians" who do not strive with God through obedience, usually outwardly discerned by keeping the commandments, especially the Sabbath commandment. But the Pharisees outwardly kept the commandments; yet Jesus said that not one of them actually kept the commandments (John 7:19). Thus, it is not enough to attend services on the Sabbath, then to show no love—the weightier manner of the law—to one's brother. Rather, the person who keeps what is truly important will "sigh and groan over all of the abominations that are committed in [Jerusalem]" (Ezek 9:4), with this *Jerusalem* now being the heavenly city inhabited by those who have born of Spirit; i.e., the house of God grown large.

Membership in spiritual Esau is determined not through when the Sabbath is observed, but through failure to sigh and cry aloud about the abominations committed within Christendom.

No one of endtime Esau, the hated son, shall be spared. God will not have pity on any, regardless of how well they sing praises to Him or create websites dripping of blood. If the disciple will not sigh and cry about the abominations committed within the Church, then the disciple is of the hated son.

It isn't legalistic commandment-keeping that causes the one son to be loved; it isn't a matter of all Sabbatarian disciples being Israel and all who observe Sunday being Esau although this is an easily discerned demarcation. Rather, it is the person who sighs about and cries out against "everyone who loves and practices falsehood" (Rev 22:15) that is of the loved son; for Christ bears the sins of both the one who sighs and cries, and the one

who either actively or passively condones wrong-doing. The first is loved; the later is hated, for cause.

Returning now to Port Austin: those who support Edwards do not sigh and cry about his wrong-doing. They are, or would like to believe that they are, in the sanctuary, where the slaying will begin (Ezek 9:6). It will be their turn to cry aloud when they are cast into the lake of fire.

The Lord [*YHWH*] told Ezekiel, “The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great. The land is full of blood, and the city full of injustice ... my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity; I will bring their deeds upon their heads” (9:9–11). And this is what God said in the vision of Obadiah.

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