

APOLOGETICS: Volume II

A Manual of Procedures

For

The Philadelphia Church
&
Associated Fellowships

**With Foundational Bylaws and an Account of the
Association's Polity and Beliefs**

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Preface

How to Begin

For many people, the Holy Bible is the largest book they will ever read, and because of its size, they will read a little here and a little there, studying a particular passage by looking up other passages that use the same word or relate to the same subject. This method of Bible study is widely advocated. The books of the Bible have been divided into chapters and verses to facilitate this type of Bible study, described by the prophet Isaiah as the way by which drunkards of Ephraim (Isaiah 28:1) caused a people to “fall backwards, and be broken, and snared, and taken” (v. 13). That is correct! Studying the Bible by looking up related verses pertaining to a subject causes the student to take these verses out of their context. The Bible is not intended to be sliced into thin passages and reassembled together as if the student were building the house of God from twigs. Rather, the Bible is the visible, physical Word of God. It reveals to disciples what is written in the invisible, spiritual Book of Life, kept in heaven and in which the names of disciples are written, with these names and human histories forming epistles or letters from Christ, “written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts” (2 Cor 3:3).

The Bible forms, in conjunction with the heavenly Book of Life, an epic or Homeric simile in which the extended metaphoric conceit uses the things of this world [the things that have been made] to reveal the invisible things of God, including His eternal power and divine nature (Rom 1:20). The things hidden since the foundation of the world were revealed by Jesus through parables (Matt 13:34-35), which are metaphors used to reveal a moral principle. Jesus told His disciples that He had spoken to them in figures of speech (John 16:25)—He spoke the Father’s words that were not about the things of this world but about the things of heaven which human languages cannot directly describe. Jesus’ use of figurative language served as a translation for what cannot be named through mimetic language use.

Translation from one language to another is always a problem.

Words are sounds or images to which meaning has been assigned, but words do not come with their meanings attached to them. The reader employs at a subconscious level a strategy for assigning meaning to words, with this strategy given the lofty sounding name of “exegesis”—how a person “exits” a written text, or takes meaning from the text when this person leaves the text.

How a person assigns meaning to words is controlled by the “reading community” to which the person belongs: the person will usually assign the same meaning to words as his or her teacher assigned to these words. Without the consistent assignment of meaning, a written text can mean anything. And even with a consistent assignment, words undergo changes of meaning over time as one reading community is replaced by

another. Therefore, words do not have “absolute” meanings that are unchanging over two thousand years, but blocks of words [as opposed to single words] better resist changes of meaning, the reason why the Bible is to be read in stories that have a beginning and an end. These stories will usually start with a passage of genealogy and end with the next passage of genealogy.

When meaning is assigned to long passages of story, the likelihood for extended mistranslation is greatly reduced. But God knew all of this when He confused the languages at Babel. Therefore, through the writings of the Apostle Paul, God gives how He expects disciples to take meaning from the Bible: the invisible things of God are made plain by what can be seen, and the physical things of the world precede the spiritual things of God (1 Cor 15:46). The visible things of this world are physical; the invisible things of God are spiritual. The person whose mind is focused on the visible things of this world—whether those things are nations or kingdoms or the temple that was in Jerusalem—is physically minded and cannot please God (Rom 8:8). The person who is spiritual hears about wars and rumors of wars, but is not alarmed (Matt 24:6) for wars and rumors of wars are not signs of Christ’s coming and the close of this evil age. Rather, they are but the beginning of the birth pains of the last Eve bringing forth many sons of God (v. 8).

The use of the visible things of this world to reveal the invisible things of God forms the basis for “typological exegesis,” the means by which flesh and blood disciples who cannot bodily enter heaven can “peer” into the heavenly realm as if using a periscope. Through seeing darkly, or through the interplay of shadows, disciples are able to “see” spiritual things, including the entirety of the plan of God. And when perceiving earthly “types” as shadows and copies of heaven things, the problems of translation nearly disappear. If a translator gets this word wrong or that word wrong, the “story” nevertheless gets told in sufficient detail that the shadow of a spiritual thing is seen by those who are spiritually minded, or said another way, by those who have the mind of Christ Jesus.

The Apostle Paul said that as a skilled master builder, he laid the foundation for the house of God, which is Jesus Christ, and that no one else can lay a different foundation (1 Cor 3:10-11). This foundation is for the temple of God that is built from living stones (1 Pet 2:4-5), with its cornerstone being the stone that was rejected by natural Israel. Paul further wrote that disciples are God’s temple (1 Cor 3:16-17; 2 Cor 6:16): the Body of the resurrected Christ Jesus is the temple he would *raise up in three days* (John 2:19). Paul said that disciples, individually and collectively, are the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27). And in the letter sent to the angel of the church at Philadelphia, the glorified Christ said, “I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. The one who conquers, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God” (Rev 3:11-12) — pillars stand on the foundation of a building. They do not rest atop walls of stone. The Apostle Paul laid the foundation; the saints of spiritual Philadelphia stand on this foundation and reach up to support the roof and capstone, with the roof being the great endtime harvest of firstfruits and the capstone being the returned Christ. No work of enduring construction is built on the foundation Paul laid until the saints of Philadelphia stand on this foundation. This means that the work of Christians for nearly 2,000 years has not been built on the foundation Paul laid, but on foundations not of God.

In his vision, Christ Jesus tells John that He, Jesus, is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end (Rev 22:12). Jesus is the cornerstone of the foundation that Paul laid; He is also the capstone of the temple of God. And it is the Breath of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ] in disciples (Rom 8:9) that shapes and sculpts living stones into foundational stones, pillars and walls and roofing tiles of the spiritual house of God, with this work of shaping living stones being done off-site [here on earth] so that, as with the physical temple Solomon built (1 Kings 6:7), in heaven is heard no iron tool striking stone as in no tear shed. The sound of an iron tool shaping a block of quarried stone, making this stone into a building stone used by King Solomon is directly analogous to how trials, tribulation, and heartaches strike disciples to shape these living stones into the building stones of the spiritual temple, with every disciple being a miniature of the temple as well as being a part of the greater temple of God. This is why disciples are to be thankful for trials. Thus, through His spirit or breath, Jesus is present in every stone between the cornerstone and the capstone, but He is not present in stones laid on any foundation but the one Paul laid in heavenly Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ (Rev 21:2, 9–11).

The person who looks for another physical temple to be built by Jews in the modern nation of Israel looks for a physical thing and is physically or carnally minded. This person cannot please God. The person who will please God is the person who uses the Bible as a guidebook to “see” the invisible, heavenly things of God; then by faith, keeps the precepts of the law as he or she lives by every word that has come from the mouth of God (Matt 4:4).

In his first recorded epistle or letter to the saints at Corinth, the Apostle Paul said that he could not address them as spiritual people (1 Cor 3:1), but as people of the flesh, as spiritual infants in need of milk. Paul did not give these saints solid food; he gave them only spiritual milk. Likewise, the writer of Hebrews tells these Jewish converts that they ought to be teachers, but they were able only to digest spiritual milk, not solid food (Heb 5:11–14). The writer of Hebrews then says, “Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrines of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment” (Heb 6:1-2). And here is seen the foundation of the temple, the milk of God’s word:

- The foundation begins with repentance from disobedience and dead works. Nothing a person does in this world is considered “good,” for only God is good (Luke 18:19). But the faith that caused Abraham to believe God (Gen 15:6) was counted to him as righteousness. Likewise, the faith that will cause a person to leave the ways of this world and to begin to keep the precepts of the law, all of them, especially the Sabbath commandment, will be counted to that person as righteousness.
- The washing of hands and of the body does not cleanse the inner person. Water cleanses the flesh, not those parts of a person that it does not wet. So water does not cleanse the inside of the cup, where greed and wickedness reside (Luke 11:39). Therefore, the washing of hands is spiritually meaningless.
- Only the death of this inner person through repentance and baptism will cleanse the inside of the cup. Thus, the ritual washing of hands is a physical thing that precedes and reveals the cleansing of the inside of the cup when a

person comes, by faith, to Christ, repents of sin and turns from disobedience, is baptized, and begins to live by the precepts of the law.

Child psychologists have determined that human infants 30 months in age and under are unable to connect a symbol [something that someone intends to stand for something other than itself] to its referent, but by 36 months of age, connecting a symbol to its referent is almost embarrassingly easy. Human maturation, both in physical growth and in mental maturity, reveals the maturation of spiritual infants, sons of God born of spirit. New converts to Christianity are too spiritually immature to comprehend the metaphorical nature of Scripture, or that Scripture is a Homeric simile. Only when disciples are no longer novices can they appreciate the metaphorical nature of Scripture. And in application of this observed principle of maturation, few individuals will fellowship with *Philadelphia* unless these individuals have first grown in grace and knowledge to a spiritual age equivalent to a three year old human child, but unlike physical human maturation, spiritual maturation is not time-linked. A person who has been born of spirit for thirty years can fail to have yet reached the spiritual age equivalent to a three year old child whereas another person born of spirit for a very short while can be able to comprehend symbolic representation; so understanding symbolic representation is not an indicator of whether a person has been born of spirit or whether the person is saved, but of spiritual maturity and whether the person should be a teacher of Israel. No overseer of the Church should be a novice in the faith (1 Tim 3:6). Likewise, no spiritual novice should be a teacher yet many have been ordained as pastors and teachers, resulting in Christendom now not knowing the Father. Jesus said that eternal life is to know the Father and the Son (John 17:3).

The English translation of the Holy Bible that will be used throughout this manual is the English Standard Version, published in 2001 CE. It is not the only modern translation that comes humanly close to reproducing a reliable text, but it is one of the better modern translations—as is the New Revised Standard Version, and the New American Standard Version. The most often encountered English translation is the King James Version of 1611 CE. The principle problem with this translation is the extent to which language usage has changed over the past 400 years.

What and where is *The Church*?

I.

The Church is the assembly [ἐκκλησίαν] of God, which Christ Jesus built on Peter (Matt 16:18) through commanding Peter to *Feed His Lambs, Tend His Sheep, and Feed His Sheep* (John 21:15–17), which Peter did in writing his two epistles to the exiles of the dispersion, thereby not leaving his commission to others. The Church is also the assembly built on the sign of Jonah (Matt 16:4).

The sign of Jonah is usually understood to mean the three days and three nights Jesus was in the grave were foreshadowed by the three days and three nights that Jonah was in the belly of the great fish, or whale. But the sign of Jonah is more encompassing than how it is usually taught; for Nineveh worshiped Dagon, the fish god, and when spewed forth from the great fish, Jonah was recognized by the inhabitants of Nineveh as a spokesman from their god whereas Jesus was not recognized by Israel as the Spokesman for the Most High God. Therefore, when Jesus first gave Israel the sign of Jonah as the only sign they would see, Jesus also said that the men of Nineveh would rise up with that generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah (Matt 12:39–41).

The sign of Jonah pertains physically to Jesus' resurrection from death but pertains spiritually to the movement of breath from the front of the mouth, where the Greek name Πέτρος [*Petros*] is enunciated, to the combined front/middle of the mouth where the Greek word πέτρα [*petra*] is enunciated. This movement of breath is seen in Jesus calling Peter, Σίμων Βαρωνᾶ [*Simon Bar-Jonah*] (Matt 16:17), instead of Σίμων ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωάννου [*Simon the son of John*] (John 1:42) or Σίμων Ἰωάννου [*Simon (of) John*] (John 21:15, 16, 17). The movement of aspiration from in front of the nasal consonant “n” (in Greek, “v”) as in the name “John”—this aspiration represented by the consonant “h”—to behind the nasal consonant as in “Jonah” is the portion of the sign of Jonah that has not been well understood by Christendom. The movement of aspiration from the nose to the back of the head represents the movement from physical breath, received from the first Adam into whose nostrils *Elohim* (singular in usage) breathed life (Gen 2:7), to spiritual *breath* [πνευμα], received from the last Adam upon whom the divine breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] lit as a dove and remained (Matt 3:16) ... the dove would have lit on Jesus' head or neck, about where a whale's blow hole is located. Therefore it is upon πέτρα and the movement of aspiration from the puckered lips in the nominative /ος/ masculine case ending of *Petros* to the inside of the mouth in the genitive /α/ case ending of *petra* that Jesus will build and has built His Church¹; for the one who is of God must be born of water (of the womb) and of spirit (John 3:3–8). Birth by water is represented by breath through the nostrils, while birth by spirit comes by receiving a second breath of life or a new self entering the heart and mind.

¹ Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter as Moses changed Hoshea the son of Nun's name (Num 13:16) to Joshua so that name represented how each would be used — in Greek, “Joshua” is written “Jesus,” and while Moses lead Israel to the Promised Land, God's rest (from Ps 95:10–11), Israel had to follow Joshua/Jesus to actually enter the Promised Land.

Jonah, after being returned to life inside the belly of the whale, can be likened to the new self or new nature or new creature born of spirit dwelling in a tent of flesh. The new creature is not male or female, Jew or Greek (Gal 3:28), and is, therefore, not the person's fleshly body which after baptism remains male or female. Thus, the whale's body is to Jonah as the fleshly body of the person is to the new creature that is a son of God, and the whale spewing Jonah forth is analogous to glorification.

The Church is, then, the assembly of new selves or new creatures that have been born of spirit as sons of God, with Christ Jesus as the First of these firstborn sons of God. The shadow and type of the Church was the Congregation in the Wilderness led by Moses. As such, the Church is,

- Not a building or temple;
- Not an organization of men;
- Not a denomination;
- Not any of those things that are usually assigned as objects to the linguistic icon.

Rather, the Church is the assembly that has been circumcised of heart by spirit as the Congregation in the Wilderness was circumcised in the flesh by human hands. Therefore, the Church is wherever two or three circumcised of heart are gathered in Jesus' name, for there He will be (Matt 18:20).

The sign of Jonah has the additional dimension of being like the sign of the red sky (Matt 16:2–3), which, based upon its context, has opposing meanings. When a red sky is seen going into darkness, the sign is interpreted to mean fair weather; but when a red sky is seen going into day [light], the sign is interpreted to mean that the weather will be stormy. Likewise, when the physical body of Jesus was crucified and resurrected, the world entered a period of spiritual darkness. Despite all that happened in the early centuries of the Church, the period can be likened to fair weather. But what happened to the earthly body of Jesus serves as a shadow and type of what happens to the spiritual Body of Christ: as the earthly body died and was returned to life, the spiritual Body died and will be returned to life at the second Passover. As the earthly body suffered no corruption, the spiritual Body will suffer no corruption, meaning that when returned to life, the doctrines and teachings of the spiritual Body of Christ will be those of the 1st-Century Church. As the earthly body lay in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights and was returned to life after the third day, the spiritual Body of Christ will be returned to life after the third day of the Genesis chapter one creation account, with the Genesis creation account forming the abstract of the spiritual creation of sons of God. Therefore, when the spiritual Body of Christ is returned to life, the world will enter a figurative period of stormy weather: the world will enter into the seven endtime years of tribulation.

Because a man does not marry his body but is already one with his body, once returned to life the Body of Christ will be revealed or disrobed (Luke 17:30). Disciples will be filled with or empowered by the Holy Spirit, then delivered into the hand of the Adversary for the destruction of the flesh as the Apostle Paul commanded the saints at Corinth to deliver the man who was with his father's wife into the hand of the Adversary (1 Cor 5:5). Disciples will be liberated from indwelling sin and death, but they will no longer be covered by the garment of Christ Jesus' righteousness. They will be covered only by their own righteousness, and Sin will make merchandise of all disciples who are not the processed fruits of the Promised Land (Rev 6:6) ... the processed fruits will have

been taking the Passover sacraments of bread and wine on the night that Jesus was betrayed, the dark portion of the 14th of Abib, and will go into the seven endtime years of tribulation covered by the Cup, poured out for the forgiveness of sins (Matt 26:28).

Disciples who have not drunk from the Cup on the dark portion of the 14th of Abib are represented by the barley sold, three quarts for a denarius. The remainder of humankind is represented by the wheat, more valued, but sold into sin, a quart for a denarius.

The glorification of the Bride of Christ is the reality of the creation of the greater light to rule the day that occurs on the fourth day of the Genesis “P” creation account. The lesser light that rules the darkness is the third temple and the restored priesthood under the sons of Zadok.

The period of spiritual darkness that settled over the world when the “light,” Christ Jesus, returned to heaven from where He came—this darkness being the past two millennia that has seen one war after another and great numbers slain in the name of religion—will be as fair weather is to stormy seas when the past centuries are compared to what will happen during the seven endtime years of tribulation.

II.

Jesus is the building material used to form the ἐκκλησίαν ... when Jesus said to Peter, σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ πύλαι ᾗδου οὐ κατισχύουσιν αὐτῆς — that is, in a literal English translation, “You are Peter and upon this rock I will build of me the Church and gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matt 16:18), the Greek idiom used for the possessive pronouns “my” or “mine,” the idiomatic phrase /of me/, suggests that the ἐκκλησίαν is constructed of Christ Jesus; that Jesus is the building material used to form the ἐκκλησίαν. And it is from this sense that the Church is the Body of Christ, for unless the person has been born of the Holy Spirit (Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον) and built from and by the divine Breath of Christ (πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ), the person is not part of the ἐκκλησίαν. The Church is, because it is constructed from the Spirit of Christ, a spiritual assembly not of this world. The Church is the assembly of the new creatures or new natures that dwells in the tents of flesh of the old self that is crucified with Christ Jesus.

III.

The Church [ἐκκλησίαν] did not begin on that day of Pentecost following Calvary as is often taught; rather, the chosen assembly of God has its origins in the *Logos* [Λόγος], who was *Theos* [Θεός] (John 1:1-2), entering His creation as His only Son (John 3:16) to be born as the man Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:14), thereby producing the construction material for this invisible, spiritual assembly that would be built from Him. Thus, the Church began on the day when Jesus was resurrected from the dead and ascended to the Father, then returned to breathe on ten of His disciples, saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον]” (John 20:22). These ten then received both the Holy Spirit [Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον] and the Spirit of Christ [Πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ].

The ten disciples were made the ἐκκλησίαν seven weeks before Pentecost, with these weeks representing the time between when the First of the firstfruits is waved before God and accepted [with Christ Jesus being the reality of Israel’s Wave Sheaf Offering],

and when the last of the harvest of firstfruits is gathered into the barns of Israel, where this grain will be thrashed and winnowed.

IV.

When Jesus breathed on ten of His disciples, thereby directly transferring to them the Holy Spirit, He formed a new synagogue, for according to the Mishnah's requirements a new synagogue could be formed anywhere by ten male Jews. Thus, the ten upon whom Jesus breathed were a newly formed synagogue that "with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer [προσευχῆ]" (Acts 1:14 – cf. Acts 16:13, 16). The Greek icon used by Luke is also the word used for the regular prayer assemblies of the synagogue. So linguistically, the disciples of Jesus were (and functioned as) a synagogue within greater Judaism.

V.

The Church was initially identified as the sect [αἰρέσεως] of the Nazarenes—when Paul was on trial before Felix at Caesarea, Tertullus accused Paul of being a ringleader for "the sect [αἰρέσεως] of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5). Paul answered that he was indeed of *The Way* that the Jews called a sect [αἵρεσιν] (v. 14). The Sadducees were also described as a sect [αἵρεσιν] (Acts 5:17), as were the Pharisees [αἰρέσεως] (Acts 15:5 – αἵρεσιν was used by Paul in Acts 26:5). So the early Church functioned as a competing sect of Judaism within greater Judaism, and its assemblies were meetings of a newly formed synagogue.

In nations where "Christian" evangelism is restricted or in nations where new Christian sects are discouraged, *The Philadelphia Church* should be recognized as a 1st-Century CE sect of Judaism: from the perspective of orthodox theology *The Philadelphia Church* is both Jewish and Christian. It is what Christianity was under the Peter, James, and Paul, an assembly of Judeo-Christians who have been inwardly circumcised and who outwardly live by the covenant made with the children of Israel that is described in the book of Deuteronomy.

Nazareth is located at the heart of the Galilee, the land of the nations (Isa 9:1). When Jesus left His first disciples, the two angels addressed these disciples as, "Men of Galilee" (Acts 1:11). Jesus was identified as a Galilean (John 7:52). The *sect of the Nazarenes* is, thus, also the sect of the Galileans, or the sect of the nations (Gentiles) who would live as Jews. By extension, the uncircumcised person who keeps the law by faith and has his or her uncircumcision counted as circumcision (Rom 2:26) is a spiritual Jew (vv. 28–29), or better, a spiritual Galilean. This person will walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6) and will imitate Paul as he imitated Jesus (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17) in a continuation of the sect of the Nazarenes/Galileans.

VI.

Paul identifies disciples as the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16), for the "disciple" is the new creature, born of Spirit, dwelling within the tent of flesh that is the human body. This new creature is circumcised of heart by spirit; the tent of flesh is or is not circumcised by hands. This new creature is a son of God. These new creatures form the holy nation of God, a royal priesthood, that was not before a people (1 Pet 2:9–10),

with the tents of flesh in which they dwell—as Levites dwelt in the temple when it was their turn to serve—functioning as the temple functioned. Disciples are to serve continuously.

When the glory of the Lord left the Jerusalem temple (Ezek chap 10), the glory of the Lord did not return to the second temple until the man Jesus entered the temple to drive from it the merchants and moneychangers at the Passover of the first year of His ministry (John 2:13–22); for when a remnant of Israel returned from Babylon to Jerusalem to build a house for the Lord as commanded by King Cyrus, neither the Ark of the Covenant nor the Urim and Thummin returned. Without the Ark of the Covenant, the glory of the Lord did not enter the temple on *Yom Kipporim*. During the period that the second temple was an edifice of stone and wood, the high priest making atonement for himself, his family, Israel, the altar and temple was an elaborate ruse; for no blood could be sprinkled on the Ark in front of the Mercy Seat as instructed by Moses (Lev 16:14–15). No atonement was made, but it is doubtful that the people knew. However, because no atonement was made, the sins of Israel remained: the Pharisees were not unaware of the Ark’s absence; they were not blind (John 9:40–41).

When Zechariah, of the division of Abijah, was serving as priest according to the custom of the priesthood, Zechariah saw the angel Gabriel, not the glory of the Lord.

Therefore, according to Jeremiah’s seventy years prophecy, Jerusalem was to be without inhabitant for seventy years but the city was not without Israelites dwelling in it for seventy years ... the army of Nebuchadnezzar razed Jerusalem and the temple in 586 BCE. By command of King Cyrus, a remnant returned to rebuild the temple in 539 BCE, but the temple was not completed until 516 BCE — Jerusalem would be without the temple for seventy years. The prophecy of Jeremiah about bringing Israel back to Jerusalem equates Israel with the temple, and the temple that was destroyed and rebuilt in three days was the body of Christ. The reality of the “Israel” of Jeremiah’s seventy years prophecy is Christ, Head and Body, for disciples are the second temple of God, which went from being a lifeless physical building to being a living structure composed of living stones (1 Pet 2:4–5).

The construction of the second temple began with wood and stone, was interrupted by order of the king of Persia, but was resumed when Cyrus’ decree was found, and was finished physically exactly seventy years after the first temple was razed. But this earthly second temple served as the shadow and copy of the spiritually lifeless earthly body of Israel. Thus, Jesus entering the earthly second temple is analogous to the Holy Spirit entering a human tent of flesh: the tent of flesh (i.e., physical body) of an Israelite was without spiritual life as the temple was without the glory of God until the Israelite is born of spirit as a son of God. Then, the new creature that is spirit and dwelling in a tent of flesh can be likened to a natural Levite serving in the first temple.

The second temple began as a son of the first Adam begins, a structure formed of the base elements of this earth. Jesus entered the second temple to destroy it so that it could be rebuilt in three days as the body/Body of Christ. A son of the first Adam receives the Holy Spirit for the destruction of the old self so that a new construction can be built entirely of spirit after the third day. Until then, a son of the first Adam who has been raised from the dead by the Father (John 5:21) is humanly as the second temple was physically when Jesus taught in the temple. The Sadducees and the Pharisees that sought to test Jesus were physically as the servants of the Satan are spiritually, with these servants of Satan disguising themselves as servants of righteousness (2 Cor 11:15).

The synagogue of Satan is analogous to the portion of Israel that remained in Babylon after a remnant of Israel left to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, with entering into the Land Beyond the River analogous to Sabbath worship. The identifying phrase “of Satan” comes from the visible Christian Church remaining under or in subjection to the spiritual king of Babylon (Isa 14:4); the identifier “synagogue” comes from the visible Church being an assembly that professes to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ... until the visible Church leaves this world and enters into God’s rest, typified by Sabbath observance (Heb 3:16–4:11; Ps 95:10–11; Num chap 14), the visible Church remains in subjection to the prince of this world.

VII.

Commentary: Jesus was the last Adam, foreshadowed in typology by the first Adam (1 Cor 15:45; Rom 5:14). The Church, created from a wound in His side when He died at Calvary, functions as the last Eve. And as the first Eve believed the serpent’s lie that she would not die (Gen 3:4), the last Eve believed this same lie, believed that the Church would not die even though the physical body of Jesus died and was dead for three days and three nights.

The early Greek and Latin Churches taught that the Apostle Peter [Πέτρος] was the rock [πέτρα] upon which Jesus would build His Church, and Jesus saying that “the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matt 16:18) meant the Church would not die, but this is not in agreement with what Jesus and Paul taught. Both taught that the flesh would die and was dead, and that the spirit would live and was life. For both, the flesh served as a shadow and copy of the spiritual new creature. Thus, the Apostle Peter could only be a type of the One upon whom the Church is built; for the Church is built on the foundation that the Apostle Paul laid as a master builder (1 Cor 3:10–11), and this foundation is Christ Jesus. Peter was a type of Christ as every disciple is individually and collectively the Body of Christ, and if the Body, then *Christ*. So with Peter’s death in the 1st-Century CE, the Church died physically in type, and as Peter will be resurrected to life when his judgment is revealed, so too will the Church be resurrected to life. The gates of Hades will not prevail against it, nor shall the Body see corruption.

Physical corruption or the decay of the flesh is spiritually analogous to false doctrines and false teachings that lead to the second death. Today, the Church is awash in false teachings, and is in a state of corruption. Therefore, before the Church is resurrected to life, these false teachings have to be shown as false.

The resurrection of the Church comes by the Holy Spirit empowering disciples at a second Passover liberation of Israel.

Until the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh in a manner foreshadowed by the Holy Spirit *visibly* filling or empowering the first disciples on that day of Pentecost following Calvary (Acts 2:1–4), receipt of the Holy Spirit is an individual occurrence dependant upon the will of the Father in drawing the person from the world (John 6:44, 65) ... many are called (Matt 22:14). Many are drawn from this world. But not all, or even most of humankind has been called in this present evil age. However, it is not the Father’s will that anyone perish but that all come to God, for God is not a respecter of persons, offering salvation to one person and not to another; so the most basic fundamental doctrine of Christendom that unless a person accepts Jesus in this lifetime the person will spend eternity in the flames of hell is false. It is the Father’s prerogative as to when He raises a person from the dead (John 5:21). He can raise a person in this era while the

person remains physically alive. If He does, He calls the person to be one of the firstfruits, symbolically represented by the early barley harvest of ancient Judea. Or He can raise the person from the dead in the great White Throne Judgment, symbolically representing the latter main crop wheat harvest. Either way, the person will be raised from the dead through a second birth (that is, through receipt of the Holy Spirit), and this will be the person's only opportunity for salvation. Therefore, those who have been born of Spirit in this era—those who have been called and are part of the ἐκκλησίαν—have received a second birth as one of the firstfruits, but the person who died without ever hearing the name of Jesus Christ lies unconscious in the dust of the earth, waiting to be raised from the dead. Salvation lies ahead of this person, not behind the person.

Judgment is today on the household of God (1 Pet 4:17), not upon those who have not been raised from the dead as one of the firstfruits. The name “the great White Throne Judgment” (Rev 20:11-15) implies that those who are raised from death at that time are then judged, that they were not previously judged. Therefore, those raised from the dead in the great White Throne Judgment were not, in their physical lifetimes, part of the household of God. They will be judged by what is written in the books, and some of them will have their names written in the book of life [see Rom 2:12–16].

Every person will once receive a second birth. When this happens—before Christ Jesus' return or in the great White Throne Judgment—the person will have been made by God part of the ἐκκλησίαν. This will become the person's day of salvation. So those human beings who today have no interest in God and Christ are simply not yet called. They have neither squandered their chance to be saved, nor will they be consigned to hell if they die physically before being called. To teach otherwise is an anti-love [as well as false] teaching.

The Philadelphia Church

Located in prophecy (Rev 3:7-13) and devoted to expounding biblical prophecies, *The Philadelphia Church* is an association of autonomous fellowships theologically united in delivering the good news that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13) as a witness to all nations (v. 14).

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS **of** *The Philadelphia Church*

The Philadelphia Church self-identifies itself as the endtime fellowship best representing the sixth of the seven churches to which Christ addresses letters to their angels. Its evangelistic efforts are directed first toward born-from-above disciples who have chosen to remain in sin, and secondarily toward those individuals who have never known Christ or the Father. As such, its mission is to return born again disciples to spiritual Jerusalem, the walls of which are the laws of God written on circumcised hearts cleansed by faith (*cf.* Jer 31:33; Heb 8:10; 10:16). To do this, it preaches the endtime gospel of the kingdom that *all who endure to the end will be saved* (Matt 24:13–14; 10:22). Its understanding of Scripture is based upon typological exegesis (1 Cor 10:11; 15:45–46; Rom 1:20).

Further, *The Philadelphia Church* recognizes that it is a steward of the mysteries of God, the steward to whom God has entrusted the revelation that the greater Body of Christ consists of genuine spiritual Israelites enslaved in spiritual Babylon just as circumcised Israelites were enslaved in physical Egypt. In Scripture, this enslavement is described by the Apostle Paul when he writes that a different law dwells in his fleshly members than in his mind (Rom 7:15–25); so in his mind and body, Paul represents *Christ*, with the law of God in the glorified Head, Christ Jesus, and with a different law at work in the fleshly members of *Christ*.

Spiritually-circumcised Israel will be released from its fleshly bondage to the differing law at a second or spiritual Passover. This second Passover was foreshadowed by Israel's exodus from Egypt—and as the firstborn of man and beast not covered by the blood of a paschal lamb were slain when Israel was released from physical bondage to a human king, the firstborns of God and man not covered by the blood of Christ as the Lamb of God will be slain when the spiritual nation of Israel is liberated from indwelling sin and death. If these firstborns are spiritual Israelites [i.e., Christians], they will lose both their physical lives [*psuche*] as well as their spiritual lives [*pneuma*]. Therefore, *The Philadelphia Church* will extend toward its critics within enslaved spiritual Israel as much love and compassion as they will allow, in hopes that they will cover their lawlessness with the blood of Christ, taken how and when Jesus of Nazareth commanded and how He taught the Apostle Paul, revealed in Paul's first epistle to the saints at Corinth.

BELIEFS

1. *The Philadelphia Church* recognizes the Bible as canonized without the Apocrypha as the inspired Word of God. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that events recorded in the Old and New Testaments represent the physical antetypes of spiritual events that pertain to the maturation of spiritual Israel. Further, *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that prophecy exists to reveal events and the shadows of events occurring in the supra-dimensional realm usually identified as heaven [in actuality, an inter-dimensional realm between the creation and heaven, seen in Scripture as the bottomless pit] that also effect the maturation of spiritual Israel. As such, the Father and the Son have revealed to drawn disciples the past, the present, and the future through the conclusion of the day of the Lord (Amos 3:7) in canonized Scripture.

2. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that God is one in unity and in love, but consists of two entities that in the beginning functioned as one deity as if married, and now function as a father and his eldest son. These two entities are the Father and God of Christ Jesus (John 20:17) — the One who raised Him from the dead (Rom 8:11) — and the Son, Christ Jesus, the only Son of *Theos* (John 3:16) who entered His creation (John 1:14) to be born of the woman Mary, betrothed wife of Joseph. These two entities form one deity in unity and in singularity, with this “oneness” expressed in the Tetragrammaton *YHWH*, but with the two entities revealed in the linguistic icon *Elohim*, the regular plural of *Eloah*, which is formed from “*El*,” the name for God (Gen 17:1), plus the radical for aspirated breath, “*ah*.” So in the name *Eloah*, one God and His Breath [*El* + *ah*] is present. “*Elohim*” as the plural or multiple of *Eloah* reveals the presence of at least one additional God and His Breath, as seen in the plural pronouns assigned to *Elohim* in Genesis 1:26; 3:22; and 11:7.

Deconstruction of the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* reveals the number of deities present in the name *Elohim*: one entity with His Breath is represented by “*YH*,” or *Yah* (see Ps 146:1a; 148:1a; 149:1a) and a second entity and His Breath is represented by “*WH*.” This agrees with the Gospel of John, where in the beginning the *Logos* [Λόγος], the Creator of all that has been made (John 1:3; 1 Cor 8:6; Eph 3:9; Col1:16; Heb 1:2; 3:3–4), was with *the Theon* [τὸν θεόν], and was *Theos* [θεός]. Both *Theos* [θεός] and *the Theon* [τὸν θεόν] are collectively one God, not as in one “family” but as in one hypostasis with one personhood but two personages. If God were two, then the kingdom of heaven would eventually be divided against itself and would fail. So the entities composing the one God function as one in a manner typified by how parts (members) of one human body function together, the analogy the Apostle Paul used for the Church. In heaven, the Father is the Head of Christ, as Christ is the head of the Church in this physical world.

Further, *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that disciples who deny that the pre-existing Son was the Creator of all that is [Unitarians] deny Christ and will be denied by Christ when their judgments are revealed. In addition, *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that disciples who assign personhood to the divine Breath of God [Trinitarians] inevitably deny that they first received everlasting life when they received the Holy Spirit, and they will believe that they were born with an immortal soul. Thus, they deny the existence of the spiritual life they received through receipt of the Holy Spirit, and as such, they commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

3. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον] is the Breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], "breath" used in its figurative or metaphorical sense to represent the creative and life-sustaining power of each member of the Godhead. An individual doesn't usually assign personhood to his or her breath. Likewise, disciples should never assign personhood to the Breath of God.

4. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that everlasting life is the gift of God (Rom 6:23). Humanity doesn't have within itself everlasting life. Rather, the first Adam was banned from the Garden of Eden before he could eat of the Tree of Life (Gen 3:22). The only life the first Adam possessed was his physical breath [*psuche*] (*cf.* Gen 2:7; Eccl 3:19).

5. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that born-from-above, or born of spirit disciples receive actual life in the spiritual realm when they receive the Holy Spirit. This life is given when the Father raises the spiritually dead (John 5:21), but this life can be lost when the disciple's judgment is revealed at Christ's return (1 Cor 4:5), for Christ must also give life to the disciple through the mortal flesh putting on immortality. Jesus said not to be surprised when some disciples are resurrected to life and some are resurrected to condemnation (John 5:28–29).

Both the Father and the Son must give life to a person before this person can enter the heavenly realm; for flesh and blood cannot inherit, cannot enter the kingdom of God (1 Cor 15:50).

6. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that disciples are not under the Law, but are under Grace, which is not unmerited pardon but the mantle or cloak or garment of Christ Jesus' righteousness, put on daily as the reality of ancient Israel's daily sacrifice. When a called-out person cleanses his or her heart through a journey of faith equivalent in length to the patriarch Abraham's physical journey of faith from Ur of the Chaldeans to Canaan, the heart will be circumcised by spirit (Deut 30:6; Rom 2:26–29; Col 2:11). Each disciple is then made an ark of the covenant, containing the two tablets upon which the Law of God is written, the heart and the mind, along with the jar of manna in the indwelling of Christ, and Aaron's budded staff in the promise of resurrection.

Spiritual circumcision separates those who will be chosen from the many who have been called (Matt 22:14).

All sons of God born of Spirit are as the descendants of Noah were after the Flood, the baptism of the earth into death. And of the many descendants of Noah, only the patriarch Abraham believed God and had his belief counted as righteousness—and from Abraham came one son of promise, Isaac, who, the Apostle Paul claims, was the antetype of sons of God born of promise to the free woman, heavenly Jerusalem. Within Paul's analogy, in the womb of Isaac [Rebekah's womb] are two sons of promise, one hated, one loved though still unborn. The loved son consists of disciples who voluntarily choose to live as Judeans, observing the laws of God (especially the Sabbath commandment by which disciples show that they know that God sanctifies them), and keeping the distinction between clean and unclean (the means by which they show that they know God has consecrated them).

The veil to the Holy of holies was rent so each spiritually circumcised disciple can rest under the Mercy Seat, which represents grace and which remains above the Ark of

the Covenant. His or her prayers are offered to God in lieu of burning incense, and the disciple's good works represent the Show Bread offerings. Good works is doing that which the disciple knows is right.

7. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that grace is the glorified Christ bearing the sins of drawn disciples after judgment has come upon them. Jesus' shed blood as the Passover Lamb of God reconciles disciples to the Father, who abides no sin. Jesus' sacrifice at Calvary is represented by the goat slain on *Yom Kipporim*. Jesus' resurrection and ascension is represented by the second, or *Azazel* goat that has the sins of Israel read over it before being lead away into a wilderness by the hand of a fit man (Lev 16:20–22), with the *Azazel* goats representing the glorified Christ bearing the sins of spiritual Israelites as their covering. This annually enacted shadow of grace was so misunderstood by circumcised Israel that eventually the nation killed the *Azazel* goat by throwing it over a precipice ... a figurative precipice separates physical life from resurrection in an incorruptible body; hence, the linguistic reference to a precipice in the signifier "*Azazel*."

All transgressions of the laws of God a person commits prior to being drawn by the Father are covered by Jesus' shed blood at Calvary. The person begins his or her spiritual life absolutely sin free; i.e., under no condemnation (Rom 8:1–2) ... being born of spirit (John 3:5–8; 1 Pet 1:23) is real birth in the spiritual realm, where a physical offering for sin does no good.

Ancient Israel had no indwelling spiritual life, the reason why both the lawyer and the rich young ruler asked what they must do to inherit eternal life (Luke 10:25; 18:18). When born of spirit, a person has indwelling spiritual life, and the person needs a second covering for sin, or the born-again disciple will be cast into the lake of fire if the disciple commits any transgression of the laws of God ... sin is the transgression of the law of God (1 John 3:4).

Jesus' shed blood at Calvary was a physical covering of sin large enough to cover every sin committed in the physical world, but Jesus will not be sacrificed a second time for sins committed in the spiritual realm. He will bear these sins as the *Azazel* goat bore the sins of Israel, but He does not pay the spiritual death penalty for the sins of drawn disciples under judgment (1 Pet 4:17). Again, He will temporarily bear sins committed in the inter-dimensional realm so that they are not even imputed to disciples—this is the meaning of grace.

Jesus will give the sins He presently bears (and will continue to bear until the judgment of disciples is revealed at His return) either to Satan, or to disciples who have left the covenant. The sins He bears for disciples who will be resurrected to life will be given to Satan when the reality occurs of which *Yom Kipporim* is an antetype. By then, He will have already returned the sins He had borne for disciples resurrected to condemnation to those disciples.

All disciples who remain in covenant have no sin imputed to them, and are under no further judgments. They are covered by Christ bearing their sins. Therefore, these two coverings—one in the physical realm, and one in the spiritual—represent the reality of the Day of Atonement, a fast day to be kept in perpetuity.

Further, *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that the doctrine "once saved, always saved" is a false doctrine that does extensive harm to the greater Body of Christ.

As an aside, the reason why animal sacrifices will return during Christ's Millennial reign is that Christ will not carry the sins of disciples. Before His reign as King of kings and Lord of lords begins, all of humankind will be born of Spirit, and born liberated from indwelling sin and death; all will be spiritual descendants of Abraham. And Christ Jesus will have returned the sins He has been bearing to either Satan or to out-of-covenant disciples.

8. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that following seven years of tribulation the glorified Jesus of Nazareth will return as the Messiah to establish a thousand-year reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. These seven years of tribulation are the birth pains of spiritual Israel. Born again disciples will not be raptured prior to these years of tribulation. As the second Eve, the Christian Church will not escape the pain of childbirth.

9. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that humanity is presently divided between those individuals who have been drawn and called by God and those individuals who have not yet been drawn by the Father (John 6:44, 65), and that those individuals who have been drawn and called as firstfruits are further divided between those who have chosen to live as Judeans and those who do not so choose. God, however, is not a respecter of persons. Every individual will eventually be drawn and called, with the majority of humanity—those human beings who have never known the Father during their lifetimes—to be drawn and called after being physically resurrected during the great White Throne Judgment. This will not be a second chance for salvation. Rather, to know the Father requires possessing life in the spiritual realm through receiving the Holy Breath of God. This gift is presently given to some individuals, those predestined to be called or drawn out-of-season to be vessels created for special use or for dishonorable usage. These individuals are as the fig tree was on which Jesus looked for fruit before it was the season for fruit. If fruit is found, the flesh shall put on immortality. If no fruit is found, the flesh shall wither and perish. And the remainder of humanity is not now in an ever-burning hell, but is in the grave awaiting resurrection, without knowledge of time or status.

10. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that the Sinai covenant, the law by which God married physically circumcised Israel and by which Israel was made His holy nation, has been abolished (Eph 2:15), thereby physically returning humanity to being one nation. This one new humanity, though, has been separated spiritually between those who have the Breath of God and those who do not. This separation will end when the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of God the Father and of His Messiah (Rev 11:15) halfway through seven years of tribulation. Then, all of humanity will be liberated from bondage to sin; i.e., to the spiritual king of Babylon, Satan (Isa 14:4–21). All of humanity will then be called (Rev 18:4; Joel 2:32). All will have received the Breath of God. And all who endure to the end will be saved (Matt 24:13; 10:22). Those who endure will be the great endtime harvest of humanity for which the Father and Christ have patiently waited.

11. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that the man of perdition will come during the first half of seven years of tribulation as the shadow or antetype of Satan coming as the

Antichrist when he is cast from heaven on day 1260. Satan presently deceives humanity by controlling its mental topography (Rev 12:9). He can only do this from the heavenly realm. Once he is cast to earth, he will be limited to physical means to recapture his newly liberated slaves (Rev 11:15), the logic for him requiring that his former slaves accept the mark of the beast (χξς´ – *chi xi stigma*, the tattoo of the Cross of Calvary). Again, he comes pretending to be Christ the day armies surrounding Jerusalem have been destroyed and the man of perdition is destroyed—and he goes after those disciples who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus (Rev 12:17).

The place of safety for spiritual Israel is inside the walls of spiritual Jerusalem, the heavenly city that doesn't have geographical coordinates, but theological positioning.

Hypocrisy will cause a disciple to be cast into the lake of fire—hypocrisy is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Hypocrisy is rejection of the laws of God written on a disciple's heart and mind by the Holy Spirit.

If a disciple relaxes the least of the commandments and teaches others to do likewise (Matt 5:19), which for most disciples is the Sabbath commandment, this disciple will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. This means, simply, that the person who in good faith rigorously keeps Sunday as the Sabbath should be kept will be called least; whereas the person who knew to keep the Sabbath and did not, keeping Sunday instead, is a hypocrite and will be cast into the lake of fire. It is the person who is genuinely deceived and who through ignorance doesn't keep or teach to keep the least of the commandments who will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; this person will be in the kingdom, though. The person who teaches disciples to be lawless will be denied by Christ when judgments are revealed (Matt 7:21-23). But the person who knows to keep the commandments and who keeps them and who teaches others to do likewise will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

12. *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that historical exegesis is the teaching of the traditions of men. The church's theological positions are entirely text based. As such, they are subject to modification as the church grows in grace and knowledge. Further, *The Philadelphia Church* teaches that any centrally organized fellowship with many satellite fellowships will ultimately look to "headquarters" for its authority to implement theological growth instead of to Christ. Therefore, as shown through observing new moons, local fellowships are autonomous, and are fully responsible to Christ for the implementation of doctrinal growth. Whatever a fellowship does that is not of faith is sin; thus, every disciple needs to be fully convinced concerning his or her practice of worship, with the hand of fellowship extended to all who do not cause disruption within the church.

This concludes the STATEMENT OF BELIEFS as *The Philadelphia Church* understands Holy Writ on this day: the 23rd day of November, 2008 CE.

Constitution & Bylaws

of

The Philadelphia Church

PREAMBLE:

WHEREAS, the evening of His Ascension, Jesus Christ appeared to ten of His disciples, and said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21). And He breathed on the ten, and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (vv. 22–23); and WHEREAS, Jesus Christ said, "For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter [*Petros*], and on this rock [*petra*] I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" (Matt 16:17–19); and WHEREAS, Jesus Christ said, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father [*Patros*] and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt 28:18–20); and WHEREAS, Jesus Christ commanded Peter to, "Feed my lambs," "Tend my sheep," "Feed my sheep" (John 21:15–17),

COVENANT

We, having received the Holy Spirit when drawn from the world by the Father, hereby covenant with the Father and the Son to dedicate ourselves to fulfilling all tasks divinely placed upon us as loyal and trustworthy servants, while striving to live peaceably with all men and women, showing love and exercising mercy to all. We further covenant to live by the laws of God that have been written on our hearts and minds through receipt of the Holy Spirit, obeying God in all things and at all times. We, therefore, proclaim to the world that we are members of the spiritual fellowship identified as the Body and/or Bride of Christ—and specifically, we represent the spiritual sixth of the seven churches to whom Christ directed letters to their angels: to wit, the church in Philadelphia (Rev 3:7–13).

THEREFORE, by receipt of the Holy Spirit and by authority granted from the Father to Christ and from Christ to His disciples, we hereby resolve to set forth by-laws binding upon all fellowships of *The Philadelphia Church* and upon all individual members in good standing:

ARTICLE I

The primary mission of this church shall be twofold: (1) to proclaim the good news of the kingdom that all who endure to the end will be saved (Matt 24:13; 10:22); and (2) "to tend the flock of God that is in [our] charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly ... not for sordid gain but eagerly" (1 Peter 5:2).

FURTHER, to accomplish the primary missions of this church and with the inherent authority granted to this church, (1) qualified ministers and servants shall be ordained when said individuals have demonstrated their qualifications, not as novices and not from conceit, but as sober-minded and spirit-lead disciples. Offices to which these individuals will be ordained are divinely-revealed in Scripture. Ordination shall be to no other offices, even though additional offices can properly be funded from tithes and offerings.

(2) The organizational structure of *The Philadelphia Church* shall be as an association of fully autonomous fellowships that doctrinally agree with these by-laws and with the church's STATEMENT OF BELIEFS, as amended from time to time by the consensus of the ordained men and women then serving in offices. Provision for the formation of an adjudicating consensus of elders is hereby reserved, with this adjudicating body having the right to receive a small stipend and reimbursement for their legitimate expenses, these moneys coming from the fellowships collectively.

(3) The governing hierarchy of a fellowship shall not be determined congressionally, or by the direct vote of members in good standing within the fellowship, but by the demonstration of fulfilling an office prior to ordination to that office; e.g., a pastor will demonstrate the person's calling to be a pastor through righteous shepherding of a flock of disciples prior to the person's ordination to the office of pastor. Receipt of the Holy Spirit conveys full ordination to make disciples, and to teach these disciples to obey everything Jesus Christ commanded, and to baptize these disciples into judgment. Ordination to the office of pastor, then, will be by the consent of those who have been discipled, thereby allowing each fellowship to remain fully autonomous.

ARTICLE II

The Philadelphia Church decrees that in its application of love for all men and women, any person not causing disruption through an activity of the person—regardless of nationality, race, color, creed, religious or political persuasion—is welcome to fellowship at any of the church's regular worship services, Bible studies, annual festival or new moon services, or at other church occasions. Disruption automatically includes, but is not limited to espousing, preaching, teaching, distributing tapes, literature, or materials of any kind that set forth doctrines and practices contrary to the laws of God, as understood in the church's STATEMENT OF BELIEFS. Prior approval from an ordained individual shall not be needed before a person is welcome to fellowship with *The Philadelphia Church*.

FURTHER, because of the importance of all drawn disciples, regardless of fellowship, being covered by the blood of Christ, *The Philadelphia Church's* Passover services shall be open to all who have searched themselves and have determined that they will partake in the services worthily.

ARTICLE III

The Philadelphia Church recognizes the sovereignty of individuals in their personal relationships with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Members are in voluntary association with *The Philadelphia Church*, and membership in a fellowship of *The Philadelphia Church* is not a determining criteria of whether a drawn disciple will be "saved" when the individual's judgment is revealed at Christ's return.

MEMBERSHIP: Since Jesus Christ said that no one can come to Him unless drawn by the Father (John 6:44, 65); and since Jesus Christ further said to His disciples, "You did not choose me, but I chose you" (John 15:16); and since the Apostle Paul writes that "the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot" (Rom 8:7), *The Philadelphia Church* recognizes that disciples of Christ have been individually drawn from the world by the direct intervention of the Father and by the calling of Christ until such time as the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and His Messiah halfway through seven years of tribulation (Rev 11:15). Therefore, association with *The Philadelphia Church* does not make any person a disciple of Jesus Christ; a person has become a disciple prior to having interest in associating with *The Philadelphia Church*. As a result, *The Philadelphia Church*'s duties toward the person are to further disciple or teach the person as Priscilla and Aquila did Apollos (Acts 18:26), better explaining and expounding the Ways of God. The disciple's duties toward *The Philadelphia Church* are to present himself or herself an able student, consistent in attendance, faithful to forgive oneself and others, submitting to God, and striving to live within the laws of God. Habitual behavior inconsistent with the laws of God demonstrates disrespect for God and for other disciples, and shall be the basis for barring further association after the behavior has been first privately, then publicly addressed in accordance to Scripture.

An ordained individual shall have failed in his or her responsibilities if this individual tolerates or enables habitual behavior inconsistent with the laws of God. This ordained individual shall be publicly censured.

Since being made a disciple is action done to a person through divine drawing and calling, *The Philadelphia Church* rejects traditional concepts of joining the church through application, required indoctrination, placing one's letter in the church, or other methods of documentation. *The Philadelphia Church* accepts as members those individuals who declare their membership and affiliation, and who agree to abide by these by-laws. Members in good standing are those disciples, who, by habit, have demonstrated their willingness to be able students.

Again, membership in *The Philadelphia Church* shall in no way be considered a requirement for salvation. *The Philadelphia Church* acknowledges that it is one of seven recognized endtime fellowships within the greater Body of Christ.

ARTICLE IV

The Philadelphia Church hereby adopts as the basis for its doctrines the whole word of God, as revealed in the most ancient manuscripts, and declares that it accepts the canonical texts as recognized in the Authorized Version of 1611, less the Apocrypha. (The preceding statement shall not be construed as an endorsement of the Authorized Version, but as an easily recognizable listing of canonical books and epistles.)

ARTICLE V

The Philadelphia Church welcomes cooperation with any other church body, insofar as such body desires. *The Philadelphia Church* shall not prohibit members from attending services with other fellowships, but *The Philadelphia Church* does not allow guest speakers from other fellowships to espouse doctrines or concepts not held by *The Philadelphia Church*.

The Philadelphia Church specifically welcomes all disciples who recognize their need to attend annual Holy Day or new moon services to such services.

ARTICLE VI

Because each fellowship of *The Philadelphia Church* is fully autonomous, nothing in these by-laws shall be construed to limit a fellowship from adopting additional by-laws and practices consistent with the laws of God as the particular fellowship deems necessary. Therefore, this document does not establish procedures for creating boards of directors, nor any other executive committees not specifically referenced. It defers all decisions concerning association to Scripture. Likewise, it defers all decisions concerning disfellowshipping an individual to Scripture. In all things, the Word of God shall be binding—and since meaning is assigned to words through hearing Christ's voice, the traditions stemming from how a Scriptural passage has been applied are subject to change with additional growth in grace and knowledge as reflected in an amended STATEMENT OF BELIEFS.

ARTICLE VII

The Philadelphia Church will comprise an association of private fellowships organized as non-profit churches. No church shall acquire or accumulate moneys beyond a prudent reserve to pay salaries or maintain physical facilities. No salary shall be above industry standards for comparable duties and responsibilities. No fellowship shall be formed for personal gain or profit.

Yet, disciples are scripturally bound to pay tithes and give offerings. Therefore, moneys collected by a fellowship beyond a prudent reserve necessary to pay salaries and maintain physical facilities shall be used to "remember the poor" (Gal 2:10).

The above seven (7) articles conclude the by-laws of *The Philadelphia Church*. This document shall not be amended. An apparent error or omission in this document shall be referred to the authority of Holy Writ for clarification—nothing in this document shall be construed to be in conflict with the Word of God. The will of God the Father and Christ Jesus shall prevail at all times and in all things. Amen.

The Purposes of the Local Church

The Apostle Paul wrote, “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Heb 10:24-25). The “how” is “meeting together” in fellowship and love as a local church congregation.

Elsewhere, Paul writes, “And he [Christ Jesus] gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Eph 4:11–12). The purpose of the Church is ultimately to prepare the laity for ministry so that the Body grows “to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” and is not “tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes” (v. 14).

I.

Worship: Worship is a disciple’s response to God. It is individual and corporate. In voluntary association one with another, disciples forming a fellowship of *The Philadelphia Church* will praise God, will learn from the explication of Scripture, and will beseech God for favor and for needs.

II.

Fellowship: Disciples should assemble together sometime during the daylight portion of every Sabbath [if at all possible] and should conduct services that open and close with prayer, that bring praise to God, that instruct the laity, that typifies the unity the Son has with the Father and the Father with the Son, and that allow opportunities for disciples to display godly love for one another. Fellowship is the commonality a disciple displays with others of shared beliefs: every disciple should extend the hand of fellowship to every other disciple, regardless of the state of the flesh, who expresses by word and deed shared beliefs. But righteousness has no fellowship with unrighteousness, nor godliness with ungodliness. Therefore, *The Philadelphia Church* does not extend the hand of fellowship to any disciple guilty of sexual immorality, greed, idolatry, or to one who is a reviler, drunkard, or swindler until the person brings forth fruit worthy of repentance. Disciples are not to even eat with a disciple who brings dishonor and shame onto the Body of Christ, but are to judge the Church (1 Cor 5:11–13) and to note and mark and purge the evil person from their midst.

Drawn and called disciples, born of Spirit and baptized into death, are born anew with the “commonness” that characterized the descendants of Noah, of whom God found only in the patriarch Abraham faith and belief that He counted as righteousness (Gen 15:6). And to Abraham was born one son of promise, the man Isaac, to whom the Apostle Paul compares the Church (Gal 4:28). To Isaac were born two sons of promise, one hated and one loved while both were still in the womb (Mal 1:2–3; Rom 9:13).

In the Homeric simile through which meaning is to be taken from Scripture, Abraham is a type of Christ Jesus, and Isaac is a type of the Church. The womb in which the hated and the loved sons struggle is grace ... the loved son consists of disciples who

voluntarily choose to live as spiritual Judeans, keeping the precepts of the Law (especially the Sabbath commandment, the sign by which Israel shows it knows that God has sanctified this nation and no other) and observing the distinction between clean and unclean (by which Israel shows it knows that God has consecrated this nation and no other). The loved son, while still in the womb of grace, will voluntarily practice walking uprightly before God so that when this son is liberated from indwelling sin and death at a second Passover, this son will be found an acceptable living sacrifice.

The birth of a spiritual Jacob and a spiritual Esau occurs at the second Passover liberation of Israel—this liberation will be from indwelling (in the flesh) sin and death.

Fellowship should be extended to all disciples who practice walking as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6), and who imitate the Apostle Paul (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17), who said of himself that he had committed no offence against the Law, against the Temple, or against Caesar (Acts 25:8). Although many disciples will be called by God, few will be chosen (Matt 22:14); for few will voluntarily walk as Judeans, observing those things that cause them to be one with Christ Jesus. Few will come to God as spiritual Galileans. Most will exercise their liberty by continuing to be a part of this world, living as Gentiles, worshiping God when and how they choose, knowing what the commandments are but breaking these commandments willingly for they do not believe that the laws of God pertain to them. These lawless disciples have no fellowship with any disciple in an assembly of *The Philadelphia Church* until they repent of their open lawlessness.

The Philadelphia Church does not hold any doctrine that says or intimates that a disciple must be in fellowship with a *Philadelphian* assembly to be saved. *The Philadelphia Church* does hold, however, that this association of autonomous fellowships has the key of David and holds the testimony of Christ, which is the spirit of prophecy, with both coming through understanding the Homeric simile that forms the basis for typological exegesis.

III.

Service: The Church, as the Body of Christ, serves Christ, its Head, as hands, feet, and a strong back of a human body does the will and beckoning of the head. This service includes but is not limited to ministry to disciples, one to another; teaching the good news that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13-14); and acts of mercy that include remembering the poor. Spiritually, remembering the poor equates to physically loving one's neighbor; thus, in the parable of the Good Samaritan, the man who fell among robbers and was stripped, beaten, and left for dead equates to the poor of this world.

The primary service of The Philadelphia Church's outreach ministries to Christendom is preaching repentance as John the Baptist preached repentance to physically circumcised Israel; for the present lawlessness of Christendom will, when the seven endtime years of tribulation begin, cause many born of Spirit disciples to be numbered among those who constitute "the great falling away" or "the rebellion" (2 Thess 2:3) that comes with the revealing of the man of perdition. Grace ends when, at the second Passover, disciples are liberated from indwelling sin and death that presently remains in the fleshly members of every disciple.

Disciples are individually and collectively the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27), and as such are *Christ*, the firstborn son of God, the firstfruits, with Christ Jesus being the First of the firstfruits. Therefore, the Apostle Paul stands as a representation of *Christ*, with

the law of God in his mind representing the Head of the Body, Christ Jesus, and with his fleshly members representing disciples. Paul says that he did not understand the actions (Rom 7:15) of his flesh, for he did the very things that he hated. He found that while the law of God reigned in his mind, a different law reigned in his fleshly members, with this different law making him captive to sin. Thus, a war existed between his flesh and the law of God that had been placed in his mind (vv. 21-25), a war that typifies Christendom's striving against Christ Jesus. Paul did not understand that spiritual maturity comes through fighting this war, with the mind prevailing over the flesh.

Visible Christianity is to Christ Jesus as Paul's body was to the law of God in his mind. Grace, the mantle of Christ's righteousness, covers the Body's transgressions of the law that come from the flesh prevailing over the mind in this world; however, once the disciple is liberated (as Israel was liberated from physical bondage in Egypt) from bondage to indwelling sin and death, the Son of Man will be revealed, Head and Body. The garment of grace will be stripped away, leaving the disciple who has practiced walking uprightly before God well able to walk uprightly, but leaving the disciple who has continued in disobedience able only to take sin back inside him or herself, thereby causing this disciple to be a participant in "the rebellion."

The flesh will not enter heaven (1 Cor 15:50). Unless the law of God within a person's mind defeats the flesh—unless Christ Jesus defeats the visible Christian and his or her lawless ways—the *Christian* will perish when judgments are revealed, for manifested sin dwells within the flesh, sin covered by Jesus' righteousness for as long as the inner new self (represented by the *head*) strives with the differing law found in the flesh. Hence, when the *Christian* willingly transgresses even the least of the commandments [this is usually the Sabbath commandment] the *Christian* rebels against *Christ* in a manner analogous to Paul's fleshy body doing the very things he hated. Yes, Christ Jesus hates Sunday worship as Paul hated the evil that his body did.

When Christ Jesus liberates spiritually circumcised Israel from indwelling sin and death, He will deliver Israel into the hand of the lawless one for the destruction of the flesh in a manner foreshadowed by Paul commanding the saints at Corinth to deliver the man with his father's wife to Satan for the destruction of his flesh that his spirit might be saved when judgments are revealed (1 Cor 5:5). But when Jesus delivers Israel into the hand of the man of perdition, Sin will not be able to spiritually harm the oil and the wine, the processed fruits of God's rest, with God's rest represented by Sabbath observance. Though the flesh can still be destroyed (i.e., the body killed), the disciple who loves God more than he or she loves his or her fleshy body will live forever.

The primary service of The Philadelphia Church to those human beings not yet born of spirit is delivery of the good news that halfway through the seven endtime years, the kingdom of this world will be delivered into the hand of the Son of Man, who will baptize the world in spirit (Matt 3:11; Joel 2:28), thereby causing every person to be born of spirit. At this time, all who endure to the end—enduring to the end will mean not taking the mark of the beast—shall be saved (Matt 24:13). Enduring will be by faith. Without being able to buy or sell, all who endure to the end will trust God for their protection and for their sustenance. And from this third part of humankind (Zech 13:9) that will be born of spirit through the world being baptized in spirit will come the majority of the endtime harvest of firstfruits, gathered to God when Christ returns.

IV.

The practice of common convictions: The beliefs and the practices of disciples associated with *The Philadelphia Church* must be inseparably linked so that the message the disciple proclaims is reflected in the life of the disciple. Because association with a local congregation of *The Philadelphia Church* is not deemed to be essential to salvation, any disciple associated with a local congregation who does things that bring dishonor and shame to Christ or to the local congregation will be separated from the congregation until fruit worthy of repentance is brought forth by the one who caused the shame.

V.

The proclamation of common convictions: Local congregations of *The Philadelphia Church*, autonomous in all aspects and linked only through shared beliefs (linked only in the heavenly realm, not in this earthly realm), will proclaim to the best of their abilities the good news that all who endure to the end shall be saved. Proclamation of this common conviction is of such importance that during the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years, proclamation will determine association; for this will not be the message or gospel the majority of Christendom or even the majority of Sabbatarian Christianity will proclaim. Yet the proclamation of these words of Jesus about patient endurance (Rev 3:10) establishes a local congregation as part of *Philadelphia*, kept from the hour of trial coming upon the whole earth.

VI.

Organization: Each local congregation associated with *The Philadelphia Church* will function as a single fellowship of believers, answering to Christ for its decisions and practices and not to any “headquarters” fellowship. Christ, however, is not divided into many little *christs*, each created in the image of a charismatic leader. A *oneness* in unity will exist between and among local congregations, with the organizational structure of each congregation being that which best serves the congregation. All things within a local congregation are to be done in a fitting and orderly way, with respect shown for all members.

Every disciple who walks as Jesus walked will look like Jesus as a fractal of the temple and heavenly Jerusalem; so *Christ* is not one individual but the entirety of the fractal image, with Jesus being the head and image of the whole as well as of the individual disciple. Thus, to see Jesus is to see the Father and is to see every disciple individually and collectively. Therefore, the disciple who does not look like Jesus is not of the Body, is not of the temple, is not of heavenly Jerusalem, but is a bastard.

The autonomy of the local congregation is not held in tension with an implied or yet undiscovered hierarchy of fellowships or of traditions that gives to either larger or earlier congregations any sort of headquarters status. Affiliation is individually and corporately voluntary. The gospel taught by *The Philadelphia Church* is not the intellectual property of any congregation, but has been freely received and is to be distributed freely. The copyrights held by the author[s] of this manual are held by *The Philadelphia Church — Port Austin*, and by Homer Kizer Ministries, both of which extend to other local congregations of *The Philadelphia Church* restricted [limited to purposes of education and edification of disciples] but free use of the words and ideas contained within this document.

The Philadelphia Church is not organized after a congregational model, for Christ Jesus is the Head of every disciple. Overseers have been called by God at various times and under various circumstances to locally raise up congregations through personal and public evangelism. These overseers have only the authority over other disciples that these other disciples have extended to them; this authority can be revoked at any time. But disciples do not have the authority to revoke or negate in any way the calling of God. Thus, disciples who disagree with an overseer are free to quit the local congregation at any time and over any issue or offense, and are equally free to raise up a congregation through their personal and public evangelism, understanding, though, that Christ will back those individuals He has called to a position as God backed Moses at the time of Korah's rebellion. So quitting a local fellowship should never be done for light or trivial reasons, but only as a court of last resort.

The above means that congregations cannot remove pastors, but can, in whole or in part, remove themselves from under a pastor's authority. If a congregation separates itself from a fellowship or from a pastor, and if the disciples who separated themselves so choose, these disciples are free to organize into a fully autonomous fellowship, and independent of the former fellowship, seek affiliation with *The Philadelphia Church* by incorporating *Philadelphia's* bylaws into its own foundational documents. Affiliation does not convey to a congregation any franchise or exclusive right to territorial recognition, because the usual meaning of "affiliation" implies that the one seeking affiliation is somehow subservient to the one from whom affiliation is sought. Subservience is a negation of autonomy. Therefore, as in the case of Salemville, Pennsylvania, where two independent congregations of Seventh Day Baptists are separated by a quarter mile and a cemetery, autonomous congregations of *The Philadelphia Church* can be similarly close together if they choose not to consolidate. There is no headquarters authority to declare otherwise.

VII.

Of little strength: *The Philadelphia Church* has little strength for it is no stronger than its strongest local congregation. It is a "local" church, with many congregations being wherever two or three are gathered in the name of Christ Jesus. Therefore, no local congregation should be intimidated by its smallness, allowing its small size to prevent it from doing a mighty work for God, for no cowards will enter the kingdom of heaven. In the house of God, *Philadelphia* stands as pillars each crafted from many small blocks of stone stacked one atop another.

Without being held together by a human hierarchy, *The Philadelphia Church* can never possess any great strength in this world, nor will it look like it possesses great strength. Yet it is the endtime church that keeps Jesus' words about patient endurance; that proclaims to the world as a witness to all nations that all who endure to the end shall be saved. It does by faith what the mighty cannot do for all of their strength. Still, the carnal minds of human beings cannot comprehend two and three here and there effectively delivering a message to the world, a message that must be delivered before the end of the age comes. The carnal mind equates size with power, and power with effectiveness. But Christ, using *Philadelphia*, turns the power of this world back upon itself by opening a door that no man can close, a door that allows *Philadelphia* to appear larger than life in a shrunken world, a door that judges texts by their numerical worth

not by the worth of the organization publishing the texts, a door that compounds a little strength into great rewards in heaven.

Scripture does not identify the open door placed before *Philadelphia*, but not since the first printing presses were used to spread the gospel in the early 16th-Century CE has any tool as democratic as the Internet been available for spreading the gospel. The algorithms employed by internet search engines could be rewritten to privilege the mighty over the weak, but the competitiveness that produced global search engines will not long tolerate the practice. Thus, good, dense prose written by fellowships of two or three carry more authority on the Net than the bland, generic, guaranteed-not-to-offend prose of large Christian organizations that must have a review board sign off on every document submitted for publication in the print media or electronically. So the open door would seem to be the Internet.

The Autonomy of the Local Church

I.

The Association Principle: Although subheading VI, titled “Organization,” of the previous section addresses the basic principles of local autonomy, certain explications remain necessary:

1. The practice of *autonomy of the Local Church* means that each congregation has complete authority over, and responsibility for its own affairs (within the laws of the state and nation).
2. *Autonomy* means that each congregation is fully responsible for its own financial affairs.
3. *Autonomy* means that no headquarters congregation exists that must be supported by local congregations, and inversely, no headquarters congregation exists to which local congregations can appeal for financial support or for resolution of personality issues.
4. The practice of *autonomy* holds that financial contributions collected by a local congregation are to be used for expenses within the area from which the contributions came (2 Cor 11:8).
5. The practice of *autonomy* holds that every congregation is free to accept or reject the teachings and writings of any individual member or fellowship that go beyond what is addressed in *Philadelphia's* “Statement of Beliefs.”

Local congregations are not associated with one another through any form of central authority other than obedience to the Father and the Son, with this obedience expressed primarily through keeping the commandments by faith while delivering the endtime gospel that *all who endure to the end shall be saved* (Matt 24:13; 10:22). The reason that “all who endure shall be saved” is that the Holy Spirit will be poured out on all flesh halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation, thereby causing “all” to be born of spirit. “All” will then be sons of God (Zech 13:9), called to come out of fallen Babylon (Rev 18:4).

The practice of *autonomy of the Local Church* is not held in tension with any scriptural or secular tradition of local congregations working together in an association to better accomplish the work of delivering the endtime gospel. Although it would seem that congregational unification would produce a megaphone effect, making every local congregation’s work more effective, physically associated congregations will inevitably produce hierarchical organizations that transgress the practice of *autonomy*. Therefore, the redundancy of effort that will come from every congregation working to deliver the endtime gospel is necessary for as long as sons of God dwell in tents of flesh. And what will be seen is that in this redundancy of effort, niches will be filled that would otherwise be ignored by a centralized organization because of capitalistic cost-to-benefit ratios.

II.

One Church: The Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27) is not many bodies, but one Body of many members, with the Head of each member being Christ Jesus. The Head and the

Body are *two* that are *one* in unity as the thoughts of a person's head dictates the actions of the person's body, but no man marries his body for he is already one with his body. A man marries his bride, and these two become one through marriage (Gen 2:24).

When Jesus asked the Father to return to Him the glory He had before the world existed (John 17:5), He asked for the glory He had as the Logos [ὁ λόγος]:

- In the beginning, the Logos [ὁ λόγος] was the Spokesman for, and Helpmate of the Father, the Unknown God of the Old Testament;
- When *Elohim* created humankind in *Elohim's* image, humankind was created male and female (Gen 1:26–27);
- The marriage-type relationship that had existed between the Logos [ὁ λόγος] and the Most High God [τὸν θεόν — from John 1:1–2] caused the two (the Logos and the Most High) to be one deity, conjoined in the unpronounced Tetragrammaton *YHWH*;
- This marriage-type relationship in the heavenly realm ended when the Logos entered His creation as His only Son to be born as the man Jesus of Nazareth;
- But before this relationship ended, the Logos as *Yah* identified Israel as the firstborn son of *YHWH* (Ex 4:22);
- *Yah* then “married” Israel at Mount Sinai in this earthly realm as a shadow and type of the glorified Bridegroom marrying His glorified Bride at the prophesied heavenly Wedding Supper.
- At Sinai, Israel goes from being the firstborn son of *YHWH* to being the bride of *Yah* though a bride that proved faithless.

The concept of two being one is so deeply embedded in Scripture, both structurally and linguistically, that it is nearly impossible to mentally perceive that the Body of Christ died as Jesus' physical body died, that the Body will be resurrected without suffering corruption as Jesus' physical body was resurrected without suffering corruption. What's perceived is that if the Head lives, then the Body of Christ must also live, with acceptance of the Body of Christ's immortality being the reality of the first Eve believing the serpent that she would not die (Gen 3:4).

When Jesus said that the gates of Hades would not prevail against the church He would build (Matt 16:18), He doesn't say that the Church as His spiritual Body would not die, but that the grave would no more prevail over the Church than the grave prevailed over his earthly body ... the grave prevails over a person only if a person stays dead and is not resurrected to life.

The many differing denominations within Christendom presently attempt to reconcile the Body of Christ being both alive and one by selectively excluding from the tent of “Christianity” those denominations with doctrines significantly different from their own beliefs. This acceptance of some denominations and rejection of other denominations has produced a spiritual condition analogous to the physical situation that existed at the end of the Book of Judges, when everyone “did what was right in his own eyes” (21:25). Christendom is no more “one” today than were the scattered bones of Israel in the valley of dry bones (Ezek chap 37) one people before the breath of life returned “life” to these bones (vv. 8–11). Corpses need the addition of a spirit or breath from God (v. 14 — cf. 1 Cor 2:11) before they live again as human beings; i.e., know the things of human beings.

Bones with flesh [σῶμα—*soma*] and shallow breath [ψυχὴ—*psuche*] need a “spirit” from God that comes with having life via human breath to know the things of a man. Knowing even to breathe in and out comes from this spirit or breath from God. And the only life any person has prior to being born a second time, or born of spirit [πνεῦμα], is that described by the linguistic icons *soma* & *psuche* (Matt 10:28). Thus, the fleshly body of a person without breath is a corpse—life is in the breath, carried throughout the person by the blood.

The Christian Church today is not an assembly made alive by having been born of spirit [πνεῦμα], or the breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ]. It is, rather, a spiritual corpse over whom the last Elijah breathes life for a third time as the first Elijah stretched himself over the son of the widow of Zarephath three times before the boy breathed on his own (1 Kings 17:21–22).

Again, life is in the breath carried by the blood; therefore, when a disciple does not drink of the cup on the night that Jesus was betrayed—the cup representing Jesus’ blood—the disciple does not take in the breath or spirit of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ] and dies from loss of spiritual breath [πνεῦμα].

The first time the last Elijah (Christ Jesus) figuratively stretched Himself over the son of a widow woman, Zion, was in approximately 1528 CE when Andreas Fischer began to teach Radical Reformers to keep the Sabbath; the second time came during the Great Awakening, with this second attempt to return life into the Body ending in 1962. The third attempt began in 2002, exactly forty years after the second attempt ended. And this third time will be successful, with life returning to the corpse of Christianity at the second Passover liberation of Israel.

Because the Body of Christ is today dead or breathing only with the assistance of Christ Jesus, *Philadelphia* has little fellowship with congregations who are not *Philadelphians*. In a practical sense, there are not enough shared beliefs to permit effective collaboration with other denominations or sects. This situation will, however, change following the second Passover liberation of Israel.

III.

Head and Body: The concept of two being one, a concept that allows the head and the body together to form one living entity, is seen within every person. The self-aware consciousness of the person represents the person’s head. When this self-awareness is coupled to the breathing fleshly body of the person, these two, together, form one person with the essence of “personhood.”

As seen in Scripture, the self-awareness of a person is not an attribute of the flesh; for ancient King Nebuchadnezzar had his consciousness taken from him in the instant he was given the nature and consciousness of a beast, an ox (Dan chap 4). Perhaps the best analogy is a comparison to a computer: the consciousness of a person is analogous to the software program that animates the hardware, thereby causing a computer’s hardware to do useful work.

The self-aware consciousness of a person is not an immortal soul, for Nebuchadnezzar was not given the “immortal soul” of an ox when his human consciousness was taken from him for seven years. Nor is the first beast of Daniel chapter seven given an immortal human soul when this demonic king is given the mind and nature of a man (v. 4). Rather, what’s seen is that the Lord has given to every living creature a mind and nature unique to that species of creature, but a mind and nature

that is subject to the broadcast of the prince of this world. Therefore, a cat has the mind and nature of a cat and a chicken has the mind and nature of a chicken, but the nature of all creatures presently under the prince of the power of the air will change radically when Satan is cast from heaven (Rev 12:7–10) and all flesh is baptized with the spirit of God (Joel 2:28). Then the lion shall lie down with the calf for the natures of the great predators will have changed (Isa 11:6–9).

Again, it is the principle of two forming one that underpins Scripture: the presently glorified Head and His Body are one (John 17:20–23), and form Christ. But at the prophesied Wedding Supper, the Bridegroom doesn't marry His Body, but marries His Bride, the collective of glorified disciples. Thus, the Church that is the Body of Christ will be saved in childbirth as a wife is saved in childbearing (1 Tim 2:15): the Church as Zion shall bring forth her children in a day (Isa 66:8), and her children are a Cain and an Abel, an Esau and a Jacob. They will be born from those individuals who are today disciples, with Esau hated before his birth and with Jacob loved.

The analogy that has been badly misunderstood by endtime disciples is that of the Apostle Paul, who said of himself, "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate" (Rom 7:15). He adds, "For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members" (vv. 22–23).

Disciples are individually and collectively the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27); thus, Paul in himself represents the Body of Christ. The law of God that was in his mind, now, represents the Head of the Body, Christ Jesus, and his fleshly members represent individual disciples. In his inner self, Paul delighted in the law of God as Christ Jesus delights in the law of God, but Paul's members did the very things that he hated as individual Christians do the very things that Christ Jesus hates!

Christians, collectively, do those things that Christ hates—and have done those things that Christ hates for most of two millennia. Hence, the Father and the Son will deliver the saints into the hand of the man of perdition once the Body is able to "breathe" on its own. And this delivery of the saints into the hand of the lawless one (Dan 7:25) will cause a separation from Christ Jesus that transforms the Body into the Bride, for disciples will no longer be one with Christ once they are delivered into the hand of the lawless one.

Most of Christendom is of Esau, in that these Christians cover themselves with their own righteousness that is to God as a bloody hair coat.

A disciple cannot practice lawlessness in any form and walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6), or imitate Paul as he imitated Christ (1 Cor 11:1). Thus, before Zion gives birth, disciples separate themselves into loved or hated sons of God so that at birth, two nations will be born in a day, one obedient to the Head and the other doing those things that the Head hates. *Philadelphia* has no fellowship with those disciples who do the things that the Head hates.

Explication of Doctrines and Beliefs

Because disciples will come to *The Philadelphia Church* from differing Christian and non-Christian backgrounds, traditions, and practices; and because disciples come to *Philadelphia* because of the church's understandings of Scripture, explication of *Philadelphia's* doctrines, teachings, and beliefs are a necessary component of any manual of procedures, for the structure and practices of *The Philadelphia Church* are derived from Scripture through typological exegesis. Therefore, an attempt will be made to express here the understandings and teaching of *The Philadelphia Church — Port Austin* as of November 2008, realizing, of course, that individual disciples and congregations composed of disciples are daily growing in grace and knowledge.

It is not possible to produce a definitive explication of Scripture for *The Philadelphia Church*. Fellowships that have tried to fasten their theology down as if it were boards nailed to a building cease growing in grace and knowledge—they die, or were already dead when they committed their doctrines to print. Thus, this manual will be an on-going work in progress subject to day-by-day revision if theological growth comes that quickly.

Where and what is heaven?

I.

Heaven is the primal dimension where energy has not become “locked” into the four known forces (weak, strong, electro-magnetic, and gravitational); hence heaven is “timeless.” Time and the passage of time can be written as mathematic functions of gravity so the passage of time depends upon mass, which God created. Heaven coexists with the four unfurled dimensions of length, breadth, height, and space-time. It is to these four unfurled dimensions as *light* is to a two-dimensional plane; the inter-dimensional realm is as *height* is to all points on a two dimensional plane.

Between heaven and the creation is an inter-dimensional realm called, in Scripture, the bottomless pit. The creation [i.e., all that has been made of matter] occurs within the bottomless pit, which can be likened to the fissure into which Korah and his friends fell when the earth opened to swallow them (Num chap 16). Moses said of Korah, “If these men die as all men die, or if they are visited by the fate of all mankind, then the Lord [YHWH] has not sent me. But if the Lord creates something new, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and *they go down alive into Sheol*, then you shall know that these men have despised the Lord” (vv. 29–30 emphasis added). And it is this opening of a fissure in the earth to send Korah and his friends into *Sheol* or into hell alive that serves as a shadow and type of the fabric of heaven opening to form the bottomless pit or hell into which the Adversary and his

rebellious angels were cast when iniquity was found in an anointed cherub (Ezek 28:15). Thus, the inter-dimensional realm that is the bottomless pit—the realm that is neither heaven where the Ancient of Days reigns supreme nor the created universe where matter exists—is *Sheol*, the hell that will pass away when the bottomless pit closes as the fissure that swallowed Korah and his friends closed while Israel watched. And when this bottomless pit closes, the world or universe created inside the bottomless pit will have passed away (1 John 2:17).

II.

A timeless dimension: Early generations located heaven as space beyond the stars. John Milton in his masterpiece *Paradise Lost* used the Ptolemaic astrological system even though he was aware of the work of Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) which has the earth rotating on its axis and revolving around the sun; for only in the Ptolemaic system could Milton get heaven and hell outside of the creation.

Getting heaven outside of the creation remained the problem for those with scientific backgrounds until the second half of the 20th-Century when the philosophical concept of multiple dimensions received acceptance.

The properties and potential of a timeless dimension taxes imaginations of scholars and theologians. With certainty, it can be said of timelessness that there is no decay. What has life has everlasting life for the moment is unchanging, and the presence of life cannot co-exist with the absence of life so the status of the living is unchangeable.

All life in this dimension must coexist as one entity, and must coexist with all that will be. Thus, in this dimension there is one God, one Church, and one way to salvation—and there can be no other way, the reality of Jesus saying that He was *the way* to salvation; for if there were another way or another Church or another deity then the kingdom of heaven would be divided and would not endure.

III.

The analogy that most easily illustrates a co-existing primal dimension and an inter-dimensional realm is the relationship of light to height to a two-dimensional plane: a point on a two dimensional plane when encountering a cylinder would not be able to perceive any of the cylinder's height. The point has no concept of height. Thus, this point would conclude that the cylinder is an arc, or a circle. Only by the cylinder casting its shadow onto the two dimensional plane could this point determine the cylinder's height, and this determination would be made by observing where the light was and where the light was absent (dark). If this point did not know to attach significance to the presence and absence of "light" then the cylinder's shadow that reveals the height of the cylinder would have no meaning to this point.

Take the above example and move to more dimensions. Humans are not points on a two dimensional plane; they are enlivened jars of clay in four dimensions. Humans will have, however, no more knowledge of what occurs in another dimension — either the inter-dimensional realm or heaven — than a point on a two dimensional plane has of height. So only through shadows can humans "see" into the supra-dimensional realms, but these shadows are not cast upon the earth's geography. They are, instead, cast upon the mental landscape of humankind, with this landscape revealed through the actions of fleshly humans. Unrighteousness is, now, spiritual darkness stemming from something or someone in the inter-dimensional realm blocking the "light" that is God and that is

coming from heaven, and Scripture discloses that the prince of this world blocks the light that is God.

Referencing the above analogy, the creation can be likened to the two-dimensional plane, and the inter-dimensional realm can be likened to height, leaving heaven to be likened to “light,” which has the wave-like characteristics of matter yet the properties of energy. And it is in this usage of light that God is best understood.

IV.

The mental landscape of humankind is invisible, but it is revealed through the landscape of geographical pre-Flood Eden, which extended from Assyria in the north to Babylon in the east to Egypt in the south and to lands somewhat west of the Nile. Biblical prophecies are only about these geographical lands that are analogous to mental landscapes; hence biblical prophecies are as much spiritually about mental topographies as they were initially about the peoples on specific lands within the parameter of pre-Flood Eden.

Rome lies outside pre-Flood Eden; hence no biblical prophecies are about Rome or the Roman Empire. Inserting Rome into biblical prophecies is the primary identifying characteristic of false prophets.

V.

Since heaven is timeless or without the passing of one moment into the next moment, all that has life in heaven has everlasting life for the moment is everlasting. And without the passing of one moment into the next moment, all life must function together as one entity. Any conflict will produce the gridlock of a paradox. All change must be able to coexist with what is so when iniquity was found in an anointed cherub (Ezek 28:11-15), this iniquity caused humanly unimaginable problems. The cherub (and the angels who supported him) had to be immediately cast from the presence of God, and as a fissure opened in the earth’s crust to shallow Korah and his friends, a rent in the fabric of heaven opened to form the bottomless pit—and within this bottomless pit, the creation was produced as somewhere change could occur, where what had life could die, and actually, had to die. The creation is a glamorous death chamber within the bottomless pit.

The apparent size and scope of the universe hinders perceiving the creation as a death chamber, but unless one moment changes to become the next moment as in the passage of time, what has life will never die. Since the wages of sin or lawlessness is death (Rom 6:23), and since God did not spare angels when they sinned but cast them into what Peter identifies as *Tartarus*, the outer regions of the Greek underworld, and since God is not a respecter of His sons, angelic or human, God will take the lives of rebellious angels when this world passes away, its heavens rolling up as a burning scroll. God will not leave any of His sons in limbo forever, but will either bring them to glory or to ashes.

What is Sin?

I.

Sin or iniquity is, simply, the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4). The person who breaks the law in one point breaks the law (James 2:10), and is a sinner, having presented him or herself as a willing or unwilling servant to sin (Rom 6:16). In analogy, sin is the mental landscape through which a disciple must journey—as Israel journeyed through the Wilderness of Sin/Zin after being liberated from bondage to Pharaoh—between being born of spirit and entering into God’s rest, represented in type by Sabbath observance. Sin is the mental landscape that completely surrounds a disciple and that is ever able to kill or capture the disciple if he or she ceases following God.

II.

Before a disciple is born of spirit, the person was consigned to sin (Rom 11:32) as a son of disobedience (Eph 2:2-3). The person had no choice about whether he or she would transgress the laws of God; for the person was born as the bondservant of sin, condemned to disobedience because of one man, the first Adam. And it is this concept of being consigned to disobedience that separates Western Christendom’s understanding of free will from both Eastern Christendom’s and Rabbinical Judaism’s ... in both the Greek Church’s and Judaism’s understanding of sin a person can, through good works, prevail upon God to accept the person, thereby making Calvary an interesting but not needful phenomenon; whereas in the Roman Church, Calvary was absolutely necessary for the forgiveness of sin, and the redemption of the inherently sinful nature of humankind. The Western Church held the doctrine of “total depravity,” meaning that there was nothing good in human beings—this doctrine is flawed, for when Adam and Eve ate forbidden fruit, they took to themselves knowledge of good and evil. “Good” as Jesus used the term carries within the word the concept of an absence of decay; thus, there is nothing in his world that is “good” except faith which is not physical and as such, not subject to decay through simply being held. Hence, a person’s faith can be counted to the person as righteousness.

While Paul’s “consigned to disobedience” and “total depravity” are not two faces of the same dogma, the concepts are usefully linked, thereby making “original sin” a useful term.

III.

The antithesis to original sin is a second birth by spirit, with this new creature born free, sin having no dominion over this new creature (*cf.* Rom 8:1–2; Rom 6:14). The redemptive work of God is not a regeneration of immortal souls doomed to hell, but the “renewing” of the creature through a second birth, the creation of a new life within the tent of flesh of the old self. And because sin no longer has dominion over these new creatures in their fleshly tents (i.e., human beings who have been called-out of this world), these called-out ones are today under judgment, with their judgments to be revealed (1 Cor 4:5) upon Christ’s return ... Jesus said those who hear His words and believe the One who sent Him do not come under judgment, but pass from death to life

(John 5:24). He also said not to be surprised when some are called forth from death to life, and some are called to condemnation (vv. 28–29). For the new creature that returns to sin when sin has no dominion over this new creature spurns the mercy extended by a second birth, and thereby mocks both the Father and the Son.

When born of Spirit there is “no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:1); for the person has been mentally set free from disobedience (the law of sin and death), and can now live by the commandments of God, which before, while consigned to disobedience, was not possible. The person was not previously able to present his or her members to God as instruments for righteousness (Rom 6:13) for sin had dominion over the person (v. 14), but when born of spirit the new creature can keep the law, and the garment of grace (the garment of Christ Jesus’ righteousness) covers those times when the disciple’s obedience fails.

But as the Apostle Paul observed, a different law reigned in his fleshly members than in his mind, for his fleshly members were not liberated from indwelling sin and death. Their liberation will not come until the second Passover.

Spiritual birth begins a war between the law of God in the mind of the disciple and the law of sin and death that resides in the flesh, for the new creature must rebel against the disobedience of the prince of this world as his angels (converts to disobedience) waged war against God and His angels in heaven when iniquity was found in this anointed cherub.

The redemptive work of God is about setting free human beings who have been consigned to disobedience because their father (however many times removed) is the first Adam, but this work is not that of human beings. No person can force the Father to draw a person from the world and give to this person a second birth, and the second Passover cannot be hurried. And unless the Father draws the person, he or she remains consigned to disobedience ... Martin Luther made the observation that the law seemed to exist to prove that it couldn’t be kept—and it cannot be kept by those who remain consigned to disobedience. They are not free to keep it. And being redeemed from sin is all about being born of spirit so that the liberated person can keep the commandments.

IV.

The dogma of visible Christendom would have the born of spirit disciple free from having to keep the commandments of God, thereby making this disciple an unwitting bondservant of sin; whereas the “law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:2) sets a person free to keep the commandments of God. Christendom’s prevailing dogma is exactly opposite of what the Apostle Paul taught. Disciples are not set free to transgress the law, but set free to keep the law. Obedience equals life. Disobedience is sin, which equals death. Disciples have been set free from sin and death so that they can choose life, which comes through obedience by faith to God.

The redemptive work of God is simple: Jesus said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them” (Matt 5:17). One reason He came was to demonstrate that when a person is not born into bondage to disobedience [Jesus’ Father was *Theos*, and was not a descendant of the first Adam], the person can live by the commandments of God. And when liberated from bondage to sin, the person is liberated from death.

V.

Twice born means that the person has two lives, one that animates the flesh (the birth by water), and the other that is of spirit that has come from heaven as a type of the man Jesus coming from heaven. The mystery that the Apostle Paul did not understand (Rom 7:15) is that the flesh remains in bondage to disobedience until the Second Passover; that the fleshly members of a disciple are analogous to the Body of Christ; that a different law [not the law of God] reigns in the fleshy members.

The new creature born of Spirit and domiciled in the tent of flesh is born liberated from disobedience and is born free to keep the law of God, but the tent of flesh does not enter the womb a second time (Nicodemus' question) to be born again. The tent of flesh remains as it was when the new creature is born into this tent—the new creature is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, bond nor free (Gal 3:28); yet the tent of flesh remains male or female, Jew or Greek, bond or free. *The new creature is not the tent of flesh.* Nor is this new creature the regeneration of an already existing immortal soul dwelling within the person. Rather, this new creature is what Paul claimed it was, a son of God, born of spirit (i.e., composed of spirit), that has come from heaven and will return to heaven at the person's death as a human being's physical breath returns to being wind at death.

The above is a hard analogy to initially understand: a person is born with no life other than that which comes through physical breath. Everlasting life is the gift of God (Rom 6:23), and not something inherited from a physical father. Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden before they ate of the Tree of Life. So no person has indwelling eternal life prior to receiving it from God the Father through Christ Jesus; for Jesus told the Pharisees that God raises the dead and gives them life (John 5:21), with the Pharisees then hearing Jesus speak being counted as dead. So when a person is drawn from this world by the Father (John 6:44, 65) and called by Jesus (John 15:16), the person receives a second birth in the form of receiving the Holy Spirit, the divine Breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], which has come from heaven to raise the person from the dead, or from spiritual lifelessness. Jesus must still give life (again John 5:21) to the person to whom the Father has given life, with this second giving of spiritual life coming when the mortal flesh puts on immortality. So being born of spirit will not automatically get a person into heaven; rather, being born of spirit simply means that a new creature, composed of spirit (i.e., of the metaphorical Breath of God), now dwells within the mind and heart of the person. And judgment is on the new creature (1 Pet 4:17) who is of the household of God. Judgment is not today on the sons of disobedience for they have no life in the heavenly or inter-dimensional realm, and in this earthly realm they are subject to the magistrates of this world. Only when these sons of disobedience are resurrected from death through a second birth in the great White Throne Judgment (Rev 20:11–15) will they come under the judgment of God. At that time, “all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law” (Rom 2:12), whereas those “who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires ... show that the work of the law is written on their hearts” (vv. 14–15) so that their consciences will accuse and excuse them when “God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus” (v. 16).

Again, no person is born physically with an immortal soul. The teaching that human beings possess immortal souls entered Christendom as a borrowed concept from Greek paganism, but this concept is now so ingrained into the psyche of Western Christendom that it cannot be easily returned to paganism. Therefore, it will become a “test” concept used by the Antichrist to separate genuine disciples from false Christians when the

world professes to be “Christian.” It has been a “test” concept used by God to separate the wicked from the righteous since the days of Solomon (Eccl 3:17–18).

Today, the new creature dwelling in a tent of flesh must wrestle against the tent as if fighting its way out of a paper bag. It must strive against the indwelling law of sin and death (Rom 7:21–25) as Jesus will strive against the lawless Church, and it must ultimately prevail. Grace covers those times when this new creature loses battles to indwelling sin. But if this new creature will not or does not fight against this indwelling sin, this new creature will perish in the lake of fire.

The idea of Jesus striving against the Church is not understood by those with whom He will strive. The concept was admittedly not understood by the Apostle Paul. Yet the core of this concept is expressed in Paul writing, “Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day [the Second Advent] will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed” (2 Thess 2:3).

Because the concept of the Body of Christ doing the very things that the Head hates is central to understanding why the Tribulation must occur, it is *Philadelphia’s* task to take this knowledge to the synagogue of Satan in hopes that some *Christians* forsake lawlessness and return to the covenant by which sins are forgiven.

VI.

The fight into which the infant son of God is born can be won, and has been won by Christ Jesus. But a disciple gives Christ’s victory to Satan when the disciple makes him or herself a willing servant of sin.

Jesus disclosed the relationship between the old written code that regulated the actions of the hand and the body of a natural Israelite, not born of Spirit, and the inner written code inscribed on tablets of flesh [the heart and the mind] of a spiritually circumcised Israelite:

You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the *Gehenna* of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come offer your gift. (Matt 5:21–24)

You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (vv. 27–28)

From hand to heart, body to mind ... the old written code that governed the actions of the hand and the body of an Israelite moved inward to govern the desires of the heart and the thoughts of the mind—same code. Not a new set of commandments, but the same commandments inside the cup, inside the clay pot that will be made into a vessel for honored use or into a vessel of wrath. And when the inside of the cup is clean, the whole cup is clean.

VII.

When the laws of God are written on hearts and placed in minds, the Sabbath commandment does not move to another day, but remains the seventh day. However,

under the inner written code, the Sabbath commandment does not regulate what the hand and body does, but the desires of the heart and the thoughts of the mind. And if the desires of the heart are to enter into fellowship with God—to enter into His rest—then the disciple will not do those things that are not of God on the Sabbath; for when the inside of the cup enters into God’s rest, the whole cup enters into God’s rest.

What is meant by Grace?

I.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under the law but under grace” (Rom 6:14), but what did he mean by using the Greek word χάρις (in Roman characters “charin/charis”), translated as grace, especially in light of Paul also writing, concerning his thorn in the flesh, that God said to him, “My grace [χάρις] is sufficient for you; for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor 12:9)? And how would Paul have perceived the modern tension that has developed between the concepts that grace is sufficient to cover any sin, and that grace does not free disciples from their responsibility to behave rightly by keeping the precepts of the law?

One of visible Christianity’s most enduring disputes was between Pelagius and Augustine with the British monk Pelagius holding that even under grace disciples were still obliged to morally keep the law, a position that approximated that of the Greek Church. Augustine, in the argument that officially prevailed, contended that grace alone was sufficient for salvation. But good does not come from evil regardless of whether that evil is covered by grace. Plus, the Apostle John wrote,

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he [Jesus] appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:4–10)

It isn’t the son of disobedience who continues in disobedience that is under grace, but rather, the person who no longer presents his or her members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness. Sin no longer has dominion over this person (Rom 6:12–14); whereas the person who keeps on sinning is of the Adversary.

Grace as the mantle of Christ Jesus’ righteousness is sufficient to cover any sin or transgression of the law, even to teaching others to be lawless. However, Jesus said that not everyone who says to Him, “Lord, lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the ones who do the will of the Father (Matt 7:21–23). Therefore, Augustine’s argument that grace alone is sufficient turns back upon itself as if it were a poisonous snake biting its tail in what the Apostle Paul condemned: “And why not do evil that good may come? — as some people slanderously charge us with saying” (Rom 3:8). The *grace is sufficient* argument permits the sinner to continue in his or her lawlessness without ever attempting to keep the precepts of the law. This person does evil, and is an evil-doer. This person is of the Adversary. And this person will be resurrected to condemnation

(John 5:29). So while grace was sufficient to cover the person's lawlessness, Christ promises not to extend grace to such a person, who when liberated from disobedience readily presents his or her member to sin as willing bondservants.

The above is the understanding that Christendom has lacked: the person who has been born anew is no longer a bondservant to disobedience. This person is free to keep the law whereas the person over whom sin has dominion is not free to keep the law. Thus, if the person free to keep the law voluntarily returns to disobedience [sin] (Rom 6:16), the person is not covered by Christ's garment of righteousness; this person has rejected Christ, rejected Grace, and will die in his or her lawlessness for no more sacrifice remains for this person. This person has committed blasphemy against the Holy Spirit by voluntarily returning to lawlessness. This person is a spiritual bastard in that he or she was born anew as a son of God but rejected God as the new creature's Father and instead chose the Adversary as the new creature's father.

The person who attempts to walk uprightly once the person is born of Spirit will still commit sin (1 John 1:8–10), but this person, because he or she condemns sin in his or her walk with Christ, is under the mantel of grace. The person judges and condemns him or herself—and because the person rightly judges him or herself, the person will not have to be judged by Christ Jesus; so even when the person does what the person hates (Rom 7:21–25) as the Body of Christ does what Jesus hates, the person has heard the words of Jesus and believes the Father and thus passes from death to life without coming into judgment (John 5:24).

- The person who presents his or her members to God as instruments for righteousness does not voluntarily returned to sin;
- This person presents his or her members to God as instruments for righteousness;
- Because this person, when he or she falls short of the righteousness of Christ judges him or herself as unworthy thereby not requiring that Christ judge the person;
- This person hates what the person has done, and repentance follows the person's condemnation of him or herself;
- And Christ is faithful to forgive repentant disciples whom He covers with His righteousness.

If a son of God hates the lawlessness that continues to dwell in this son's fleshly tent as Christ Jesus hates the lawlessness of the visible Christian church, then the son of God (the new creature born of spirit) condemns the flesh and Christ Jesus does not have to condemn the disciple.

The problem with Christendom's teachings about grace and freewill comes from failure to understand what it means to be born of spirit. The tension between the two opposing concepts of grace comes from not comprehending Jesus' earthly [physical] illustration (John 3:12). Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus said, nor can anyone else not born of spirit understand.

II.

Grace is the spiritual reality foreshadowed by *Yom Kipporim* (Lev chap 16), and typified by the mercy seat and two cherubim covering the Ark of the Covenant (Ex 37:1–9). Whereas Grace has traditionally been described as unmerited pardon, or the abrogation

of “the record of debt that stood against us [disciples] with its legal demands” (Col 2:14), it is, rather, the garment (Gal 3:27) of Christ Jesus’ righteousness that disciples put on daily as ancient Israel covered itself through *the daily*, or the daily sacrifice.

Although the 10th day of the seventh month of the sacred year is traditionally identified as *Yom* [day] *Kippur* [atonement], as seen in Leviticus 23:27, the plural is used: *Kippur* should properly be transcribed as *Kipporim*, for the bullock atones for the high priest and his family, and the goat sacrificed on the alter atones for the people, whereas the *Azazel* bears the sins of the people—this most high Sabbath is the Day of Coverings [as in painting over or wiping out], for both goats are the sin offering for Israel:

And he [Aaron] shall take two male goats for a sin offering ... Aaron shall cast lots over the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other for Azazel [sent away]. And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the Lord and use it as a sin offering, but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel ... he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people ... Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgression, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area. (Lev 16:5, 7–10, 15, 21–22)

If the high priest kills the goat dedicated to the Lord as the sin offering, then what is the need to confess over the live goat’s head the sins of Israel?

The bullock and both goats represent Christ. Jesus’ beaten body and His splattered blood are the reality of the sin offering the high priest offered for himself (Lev 16:11). The goat sacrificed on the altar represented Christ’s death at Calvary. Jesus was the accepted sin offering that God gave for Israel. But after three days, the Father raised Jesus from the dead and Jesus ascended into heaven where He bears the sins of Israel, now a spiritually circumcised nation, as the Azazel goat bore the sins of Israel in the wilderness.

Grace is Christ Jesus bearing the sins of Israel. He, Christ, covered the sins of Israel in this world with His blood at Calvary. He now covers the sins of Israel in the inter-dimensional realm with His righteousness.

III.

Grace exists when sin is not counted as sin; thus, prior to Moses all of humankind was under “natural grace,” for the Apostle Paul wrote, “[F]or sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law” (Rom 5:13). Before the giving of the law, Israel—as was all of humankind—was under a form of natural grace, but with the giving of the law, Israel became responsible or accountable for the nation’s lawlessness. However, the remainder of humanity remains under natural grace even to this day. For the remainder of humanity (i.e., the portion that is not either natural or spiritual Israel), natural grace will not end until the middle of the seven endtime years of tribulation.

Spiritually circumcised Israel is now under spiritual grace, the covering of Christ’s righteousness; therefore, spiritually circumcised Israel is in a spiritual state typified by

the state natural Israel was in prior to Mount Sinai (Ex chap 20). No sin is counted to this holy nation of God (1 Pet 2:9), which Paul doesn't yet identify as Israel but as Isaac (Gal 4:28, 31). And in the womb of Isaac are two sons that will be born when Israel is liberated from indwelling sin and death, the spiritual reality of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. This liberation of Israel from sin and death comes at the second Passover, the spiritual reality of physically circumcised Israel's liberation from physical bondage to a physical Pharaoh.

Yom Kipporim is linked to the Passover season though the following:

- The bullock and the two goats chosen on the 10th day of the seventh month symbolize Jesus entering Jerusalem riding on a colt on the 10th day of the first month.
- Jesus enters Jerusalem as both future high priest, the reason for riding on the colt, and as the Passover Lamb of God, what the high priest would have carried on this day into Jerusalem.
- The sacrifice of the goat dedicated to the Lord on *Yom Kipporim* symbolizes Jesus' crucifixion as the Passover Lamb of God on the 14th of the first month.
- Reading the sins of Israel over the head of the Azazel goat and leading this goat into the wilderness symbolizes the resurrected Jesus ascending to heaven to sit down at the high hand of God as Israel's high priest and advocate, with Jesus bearing the sins of Israel. This is the reality of Grace.

What happens on *Yom Kipporim* is a compression of the events of the Passover season, and this compression is the justification for afflicting the flesh through fasting [abstaining from food and drink for the twenty-four hour period]. During the Days of Unleavened Bread, leavening represents sin and unleavened bread is the bread of affliction.

During the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Israel is to put all leavened bread out of its dwellings as an acting-out of Israel living without sin during these seven days that symbolize the seven endtime years. During these seven days, the staple of human life becomes sin, for Jesus said He was the Bread that came down from heaven. He was to be, for these seven days, the staple of life.

Rather than eat leavened bread for the seven days of the Feast, Israel is to eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction—Israel is to afflict the flesh for this Sabbath, what John calls the entire Passover season (John 19:31). And it is the compression of the entirety of the Passover season with the focus of Passover being Christ Jesus that will have Israel fasting on Atonement.

IV.

Grace is the covenantal relationship of disciples with Christ Jesus first implemented when Jesus "took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them [the Twelve], saying, 'Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins'" (Matt 26:27–28). Life is in the blood (Gen 9:4). Jesus' life was symbolically in His blood, as in Jesus being a life-giving spirit (1 Cor 15:45). Receiving that which sustains spiritual life comes, now, through drinking of the cup on the night that Jesus was betrayed (1 Cor 11:23, 25).

The wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23), which is physical death in this realm for sins committed in this earthly realm, and spiritual death for sins committed in the inter-

dimensional heavenly realm. What sustains life, physical and spiritual, is the forgiveness of sins.

Grace comes through the reality symbolized by the two goats taken on *Yom Kipporim*, with Jesus' death at Calvary paying the penalty for every sin committed by Israel in this physical realm, and with Him bearing the sins of Israel in the inter-dimensional heavenly realm covering the lawlessness of disciples in that realm. But Jesus bears the sins of Israel through the Passover covenant, with the sacraments of bread and wine representing His body and blood, with Him being the selected Passover Lamb of God, a Lamb appropriate to the size of God's household. Jesus does not bear the sins of those who do not drink of the cup on the night He was betrayed. *Those disciples who do not take the sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed are not covered by Grace*; for it is through drinking of the cup that disciples come under His blood of the covenant that has been shed for the forgiveness of sins.

The importance of taking the sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed is so great that *The Philadelphia Church* holds open Passover services for all who have examined themselves and will thus take of the cup in a worthy manner.

Grace is not extended to disciples who present their members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness (Rom 6:13, 16); nor is grace extended to disciples who refuse to drink of the cup on the night that Jesus was betrayed. Ignorance of the sacraments is not, however, a refusal, but there should not be any disciple who does not know to take the sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed. That there is, or that there might be is an indictment of Christendom and its teachers, the charge being denial of Christ.

V.

The writer of Hebrews says, "Behind the second curtain was a second section called the Most Holy Place" (9:3), which the high priest could enter only once a year, on *Yom Kipporim*, with the symbolism of this second place representing heaven and with the high priest being a type of Christ Jesus, who ascended to the Father as the Wave Sheaf Offering midweek during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

- Again, the high priest entering the Holy of holies to make atonement for himself and his family with the blood of a young bull was a shadow and copy of Jesus making atonement for Himself by the stripes He bore, with His splattered blood being analogous to the sprinkled blood of the bull.
- The high priest making atonement for Israel, the temple, and the altar with the blood of the sacrificed goat forms the shadow of Jesus' death at Calvary and Him ascending to the Father and being accepted by the Father as the First of the firstfruits.
- The high priest reading over the head of the Azazel goat the sins of Israel forms the shadow and copy of Jesus bearing the sins of Israel in the inter-dimensional heavenly realm.
- Not all of physically circumcised Israel entered the Holy of holies, but only the high priest, and then he entered only once a year.
- Not all of spiritually circumcised Israel will enter heaven, but only those disciples who are one with Christ Jesus through walking as He walked; through imitating Paul who committed no offense against the law, or against the temple; through being *Christ*.

- The disciples who will enter heaven will do so on only one day, the day when judgments are revealed upon Christ Jesus' return.
- Christ Jesus will return on the 10th day of the first month, 2520 days after the Second Passover liberation of Israel ... seven prophetic years of 360 days each are 35 days shorter than seven solar years of 365 days each.

Luke records Jesus saying, “Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all ... so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed” (17:26–27, 30).

- Noah entered the Ark on the 10th day of the second month, and the flood came on the 17th day, seven days later (Gen 7:10–11).

If the Son of Man were revealed after seven years of tribulation, or after even three and a half years, *the world situation will not be like it was when Noah entered the Ark*: the effects of the Tribulation, a time like none other, will have warned humankind that all need to come before God in humility and repentance. Only if the Son of Man is revealed at the beginning of the seven endtime years—these years now being like the seven days that Noah was in the Ark before the previous world ended in a flood—will humankind be caught marrying and giving in marriage, unaware of what is about to happen.

As the 10th day of the first month saw the selection and penning of Passover lambs; as Jesus entered Jerusalem on the 10th day of the first month as future high priest and as the Passover Lamb of God; as Noah and the seven and the selected pairs of every species of animals entered the Ark on the 10th day of the second month; as Moses, the man selected by God to lead Israel out from bondage, entered the cloud on the 10th day of the third month (Ex 24:16); and as the high priest entered the Holy of holies on the 10th day of the seventh month—the 10th day represents selection. The judgment of the firstfruits will be revealed upon Christ's return (1 Cor 4:5), and Christ will return on the 10th day of the first month. Of the many disciples who have been called, the few who will be chosen [selected] (Matt 22:14) will be revealed on the 10th day.

But before Jesus returns to marry His Bride, the Church, He must first separate the Church that is His Body from Himself, for no man marries his own body.

Of the many differences between *Philadelphians* and other Sabbatarian Christians, the understanding that a man doesn't marry his body is among the greatest: there must be a separation of the Body from the Head, especially so when the Body does those things which the Head hates as Paul said about his own body. Therefore, the Head will deliver the Body into the hand of the man of perdition for the destruction of the flesh (Dan 7:25), and this delivery into the hand of the man of perdition causes the Body to be separated from the Head so that the glorified Jesus can marry His Bride—the liberation from indwelling sin and death followed by the delivery of the Church into the hand of the lawless one transforms the Body into the Bride.

The separation of the Body from the Head will occur when the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:30), with this revealing coming with the selection and sacrifice of lambs for the second Passover... lambs to be sacrificed on a second Passover are not selected on the tenth day of the first month and held for 35 days, but “according to all the statute for the Passover they [those who were unclean at the Passover] shall keep” the second Passover (Num 9:12), meaning that these lambs will be penned on the 10th day of the second month, the day when Noah entered the Ark.

Remembering that Israel first ate manna, a type of Christ, on the 17th of the second month, the day when the Flood began, the following holds:

- Grace ends when spiritually circumcised Israel is “filled” with, or empowered by the Holy Spirit and thereby liberated from the law of sin and death that has resided in the fleshly members of disciples, with this liberation occurring at the Second Passover, the spiritual reality foreshadowed by Israel’s liberation from bondage to Pharaoh.
- As natural grace ended with the giving of the law seven days before Moses entered the cloud, spiritual Grace ends when the law is inscribed on the heart and placed in the mind of every disciple through the liberation of the disciple by the disciple being filled with the Holy Spirit.
- The fleshly body of the disciple will then be analogous to Noah’s Ark. The new creature born of Spirit will be “sealed” inside the flesh as Noah was sealed by the hand of God inside the Ark.
- Because the new creature is sealed away from sin [the disobedience of this world], the new creature will no longer have any need for Grace, the covering of Christ Jesus’ righteousness. The disciple will be “naked” before God, covered only by his or her own obedience. (If Noah had not been obedient, he, too, would have perished by water.)
- But if, after being sealed by God, the new creature takes sin back inside itself—takes sin into the Ark—no more sacrifice remains for this person. The Ark will have figuratively sprung a plank, and will sink. The disciple will perish in the lake of fire.

Visible Christendom denies that grace will ever end, but this denial doesn’t change what will happen. This denial will only result in *Christians* not understanding what they are about to face when grace ends as the pre-Flood world ended.

Who is God?

I.

When one of the scribes asked Jesus which commandment is most important, He began His answer saying, “The most important is, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one”” (Mark 12:29). And it is this concept of one Lord that is central to monotheism and to the beliefs of *the people of the Book*, but the concept implied in Mark quoting Jesus quoting, Ἀκουε, Ἰσραήλ, κύρος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύρος εἷς ἐστίν — “Hear, Israel, lord the Theos of us lord one is,” is that Israel was not worshiping the one God with heart and mind, but with sacrifice and the works of their hands. The implication of the Gospels is that Israel did not know the one Lord, their God, for Jesus was the image of the one true God.

II.

Early Gospel texts were written in Greek, and in uncials without accents or aspiration or division between words. The texts leave much to interpretation. They do not eliminate ambiguity, but rather allow for it and even seem to encourage it. Therefore, the original texts would have required that 1st-Century as well as endtime readers hear the voice of Christ Jesus before meaning is assigned to the script.

John’s gospel best addresses the relationship between Jesus of Nazareth and the one true God. In a modern scholarly assignment of accents and aspiration and lower case letters to earliest texts, the Gospel of John begins as follows:

Ἐν (In) ἀρχῇ (beginning) ἦν (was) ὁ (the) λόγος (logos), καὶ (and) ὁ λόγος (the logos) ἦν (was) πρὸς (with²) τὸν (the) θεόν (theon), καὶ (and) θεὸς (theos) ἦν (was) ὁ λόγος (the logos). οὗτος (this one, or he) ἦν (was) ἐν (in) ἀρχῇ (beginning) πρὸς (with) τὸν θεόν (the theon). πάντα (all things) δι’ (through) οὗτου (him) ἐγένετο (came to be), καὶ (and) χωρὶς (without) οὗτου (him) ἐγένετο (came to be) οὐδὲ (not) ἓν (one thing). (John 1:1–3)

In the third clause of the first sentence—καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος—the nominative case ending and attached definite article of ὁ λόγος would invert the sentence order and make the clause read in English, “*the Logos was Theos.*” In Greek, nouns need definite articles, and the articles change with the case. For a noun to be without an article, or for an article to represent the noun (a fairly common occurrence) calls attention to itself. Thus, for “*Theos—θεὸς*” to be without an article but to use the article for “*the Logos*” removes any linguistic doubt about “*was—ἦν*” being a transitive verb: the one who entered His creation was “*God—θεὸς*” before He entered His creation. But “*this one*” was [ἦν] with [πρὸς] “*the God—τὸν θεόν*” in the beginning. So *God* was with the God in the beginning, making *God* a “house.” Jesus tells His disciples, ἐν τῇ οὐκίᾳ τοῦ πατρὸς μου—in *the house (of) the Father of me* (John 14:2) are many “staying” (as in “stays” of execution, or as in adoption papers). Jesus tells His first disciples that He is going to His Father’s house to prepare a place or spot for each of them—and as adopted sons, they

² The same preposition “*pros—πρὸς*” came also be translated as “to” as in John 20:17.

will be *sons of God*, thereby identifying the Father's house as *God* in the same way that a disciple's fleshly body is the disciple's house (2 Cor chap 5).

There are limitations to every language, and one of the limitations of Greek is that every male deity is "θεός — *Theos*. Thus, Zeus was *theos*. Hermes was *theos*. Every male of the Greek pantheon was *Theos* (all written in uncials so visibly there would be no difference in a written text between Zeus and *the Logos*). Thus, *Theos* (masculine singular noun in nominative case) is not the name of *the Logos*, but a declaration about the classification or title or office or house of the entity. Saying that *the Logos* was *Theos* is to say that *the Logos* was "God." Likewise, the One who was with *the Logos* was also *Theos*: "τὸν θεόν" is the masculine singular form of the noun in accusative case. Hence, both *the Logos* and the One *the Logos* was with are *Theos*, or *God*. They are both of the same house, the Father's house, as all of Israel was of the "house of Israel" before division occurred following Solomon's death.

John wants to establish one point beyond doubt: *the Theos* who entered His creation as His only Son (John 3:16) to be born as the man Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:14) was *the Logos*, who created everything that has been made. *The Logos* was with *the Theon* (accusative case because of the preposition "pros" — τὸν θεόν is the object of the preposition, πρὸς). Structurally, ὁ λόγος cannot be τὸν θεόν. The preposition πρὸς linguistically prevents *one* being the *other*, prevents ὁ λόγος from being τὸν θεόν.

George Bush is president of the United States, but George Bush was the president of the United States. Linguistically the present tense of the "be" verb versus the past tense prohibits the "George Bush" who is the President from being the "George Bush" who was the President except under very unusual conditions. Therefore, two individuals identified as George Bush would normally be necessary to satisfy the linguistic demands of the verb used—and as most everyone knows, George W. Bush is the son of George H. Bush, and both were elected to the highest office in the United States. Likewise, the preposition *with*, except under very unusual conditions, prevents *the Logos* from being *the Theon*. And the repetitive structure of verse 2 ["He was in the beginning with the God"] eliminates those unusual conditions—repetition is used for emphasis and to eliminate ambiguity.

Two entities, both "God" thereby making "God" a classification like "tiger" or "man" and not a name, were in the beginning. One of these two entities is identified as *the Logos*. The other is only identified as *the God*, a distinction that the resurrected Jesus maintained even when Mary sought to hug Him:

Jesus said to her [Mary Magdalene], "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father, but go to my brothers and say to them, **Ἀναβαίνω** (I ascend) **πρὸς** (to) **τὸν πατέρα** (the Father) **μου** (of me) **καὶ** (and) **πατέρα** (Father) **ὑμῶν** (of you) **καὶ** (and) **θεόν** (God) **μου** (of me) **καὶ** (and) **θεόν** (God) **ὑμῶν** (of you)." (John 20:17)

The claim John makes is that *the Logos* was God, that He entered His creation as His only Son, that He was born of Mary as the infant Jesus, that He lived without sin, was crucified at Calvary, and rose after the third day, ascended to the Father who returned to Him the glorify He had before He entered His creation. John doesn't claim that Jesus is the Father, or that His breath [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ] is also a deity. Rather, John's claim is that Jesus was God [θεός] and was the Creator of the universe before He entered His creation as His only Son. John also claims that Jesus as the only Son of *the Logos* was

with the Most High God, but was not the Most High God, before He entered His creation. And what John claims is in agreement with what King David writes in his latter psalms.

It was *the Logos* who entered His creation as His only Son:

Οὕτως (so) γὰρ (for) ἠγάπησεν (loved) ὁ θεὸς (the Theos) τὸν κόσμον (the world), ὥστε (that) τὸν υἱὸν (the son) αὐτοῦ (of him) τὸν μονογενῆ (the only one) ἔδωκεν (he gave), ἵνα (that) πᾶς ὁ (every one) πιστεύων (believing) εἰς (in) αὐτὸν (him) μὴ (not) ἀπόληται (may perish) ἀλλ' (but) ἔχη (have) ζωὴν (life) αἰώνιον (everlasting). οὐ (not) γὰρ (for) ἀπέστειλεν (sent) ὁ θεὸς (the Theos) τὸν υἱὸν (the son) αὐτοῦ (of him) εἰς (into) τὸν κόσμον (the world) ἵνα (that) κρίνῃ (he judge) τὸν κόσμον (the world), ἀλλ' (but) ἵνα (that) σωθῆ (may be saved) ὁ κόσμος (the world) δι' (through) αὐτοῦ (him). (John 3:16–17)

The *Theos*, God, sent His only Son into the world so that everyone believing in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. The claim isn't that *Theos* sent His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him ... if this *Theos* sent His only Son into the world not to judge this world, then this *Theos* is not the Father, who has given all judgment to the Son (John 5:22) but with this judgment to occur in an inter-dimensional realm, not on earth.

- The *Theos* who sent His only Son into this world not to judge the world is not the *Theos* who has given all judgment to His beloved Son—the two positions are not compatible.
- Because John establishes in the first sentence of his gospel that *the Logos* was *Theos* and was with *the Theon*, thereby identifying two deities, both “*Theos*” or God, with separateness established not in character but in linguistic structure, and because John establishes that it was *the Logos* that entered His creation, *the Theos* who sent His only Son into the world was *the Logos*.
- If *the Logos* entered His creation as His Son, He could not enter a second time, nor could He have but one Son.
- Disciples as sons of God (Gal 4:5–7) cannot be the sons of *the Logos*, but must be the sons of *the Theon* whom *the Logos* was with.

Jesus said, in His prayer shortly before He was taken, “And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God [θεόν—*Theon*], and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3), so eternal life is knowing the two, who are the Father and the Son. Knowing only the Son, or knowing only the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* as a single entity (to wit, the deity whose backside Moses saw — Ex 33:20–23) leaves the person without eternal life. This means, simply, that only those who know the Father and know the Son have life—and no one can know the Son unless the person knows that *the Logos* entered His creation as His only Son. To believe that God is one causes a person to do well, but even the demons believe (Jas 2:19). Salvation comes with knowing that both the Father and the Son are God, that they are one, but that they are numerically separate entities as every glorified disciple will be one with the Father and the Son though also separate entities. Thus, “one” represents singleness through unity, not through numerology.

Linguistic awkwardness exists, however, in the Father sending *the Logos* into the world, but *the Logos* having entered the world of His own volition. Yes, the Father did send *the Logos* into this world, but *the Logos* did the will of the Father. Jesus spoke the

Father's words, not His own: as *the Logos*, He spoke the Father's words to Israel as Aaron spoke Moses' words to Israel; as the man Jesus He spoke only the Father's words. Because of the unity *the Logos* had with the Father, the implication of Scripture is that *the Logos* would do the will of the Father without being directed to do so as a faithful wife will carry out her husband's wishes even in his absence. Therefore, everything done is by the will of the Father even though it was done by *the Logos*. And this is seen in Paul writing,

He [the beloved Son] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by [by means of] him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. (Col 1:15–16)

Jesus is the image of the invisible God whom He came to reveal to His disciples, not to all of Israel at this time. All things were created through Him and for Him; yet it is the invisible God who did not leave the heavenly realm who is the Father and God of the resurrected Jesus, thereby making the following juxtaposition evident: *the Logos* functioned as Helpmate to the Father, carrying out and doing the work that the Father directed as a wife does those things necessary to make a household function as she carries out the wishes and words of her husband. Jesus' teachings about divorce (Matt 19:3–14) come from a man and his wife being patterned after the relationship between *the Logos* and the One whom *the Logos* was with in the beginning.

John writes, “θεόν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε — *Theon* no one has seen ever” (1:18); yet on Mount Sinai, “Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God [*Eloah* — not the plural *Elohim*] of Israel ... they beheld God [*Elohim*], and ate and drank” (Ex 24:9–11).

- Moses and the elders of Israel saw one deity, *Eloah*, and in seeing the one God they saw the conjoined *Elohim*, with *the Logos* being the image of the invisible God.
- No human eye has seen the Ancient of Days, except for the prophet Daniel in vision and John the Revelator in vision. Yet in seeing *the Logos* or in seeing the man Jesus, a person also sees the Father, a linguistic conundrum that permitted the concept of a triune deity to develop.

An understanding that Israel has not had is that an inter-dimensional realm exists between heaven and the creation, with his inter-dimensional realm seen in Scripture as the bottomless pit and typified by the Hebraic concept of *Sheol*. This inter-dimensional realm is where fallen angels have been confined to prevent disobedience from producing gridlock in heaven ... all that is in heaven must function as one entity; all change must be compatible with what was, what is, and what will be. Anything that is not “one” with the Most High God will form a paradox. Thus, when iniquity or lawlessness was found in an anointed cherub (Ezek 28:15), this iniquity would have to be immediately purged from heaven, hence the bottomless pit, a rent in the fabric of heaven that is typified by the fissure that opened to swallow Korah and his rebellious friends (Num chap 16)—and as the fissure that opened to swallow Korah appeared for a moment, then closed, the rent in the fabric of heaven appeared in a moment and will close, causing all that is in the bottomless pit to pass away. However, until this rent closes there is an inter-dimensional realm within the bottomless pit, a realm that the Most High will not enter.

Visualize the fissure that opened to swallow Korah and his rebellious friends: the land upon which Korah and his friends were standing opened suddenly and into this “gap” fell atmosphere as well as Korah and all he possessed. As many who have been in traumatic events will affirm, the passage of time slows as the stress of the moment develops; so as Korah fell alive into Sheol (Num 16:30), the passage of time for Korah would have slowed. Yet Korah was able to continue to breathe for atmosphere accompanied Korah downward. From Moses’ perspective, the fissure opened, swallowed Korah, then closed, but from Korah’s perspective, time would have seemed to stand still. It would have seemed to take forever to fall as the fissure closed up on Korah. And so it is with the bottomless pit: from the perspective of being in the pit, time passes as a certain perceived rate, slowed down by stress, sped up when less stress exists, but from God’s perspective, the bottomless pit opens, the universe as a death chamber was created inside it, and the pit closes, the world [*kosmos*—κόσμος] passing away (1 John 2:17).

Within the bottomless pit, *the Logos* created the universe and all that is in it. The Ancient of Days did not create the universe. But because of the mandate of timelessness that all entities function as “one,” the Ancient of Days and *the Logos* are “one” as every glorified disciple will also be “one” with the Father and the Son (John 17:20–23). No entity who is not “one” with the Father and the Son will enter the domain of the Most High God.

If no entity, including glorified sons of God, will enter the domain of the Heavenly Father unless the entity is one with the Father and the Son, then to repeat for emphasis, “one” means something other than numerical singleness. It means absolute unity.

Because the work of *the Logos* was to create the universe within the bottomless pit, *the Logos* was the one whom Moses and the elders of Israel saw, the one whose feet Abraham washed, the one with whom Jacob wrestled, and the one who entered His creation as His only Son, the man Jesus of Nazareth. And “this one — οὗτος” (from John 1:2) was with the Most High in the conjoined Tetragrammaton *YHWH*. It was *the Logos* who was the singular *Eloah* that spoke from atop Mount Sinai.

Elohim is the regular plural of *Eloah*: *Elohim* is not a uni-plural noun like “family,” nor is it plural for emphasis or to denote specialness or sacredness. *Elohim* is, simply, the Hebrew equivalent of the English word “Gods.” Only, *Elohim* routinely takes singular verbs, disclosing that with the exception of King David, Israel never knew the Father, never knew of the Father’s existence, and since Jesus said that to know the only true God [*Theon*] is eternal life, Israel did not have eternal life, something both the lawyer and the rich young ruler knew when they asked Jesus what must they do to inherit eternal life (Luke 10:25; 18:18).

Islam identifies God as *Allah*, the equivalent of *Eloah*—and because Islam linguistically fails to recognize the invisible God whom *the Logos* entered His creation to reveal, Islam is without life regardless of how willing Muslim seekers of truth are to die for what they do not understand.

III.

Perhaps of foremost importance for Sabbatarian disciples is the reality that the Christian who calls the Father “*Yahweh*” or any uttered variation of the pronounced Tetragrammaton denies by the person’s pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton that *Yah* entered His creation as His only Son, and that He now has a new name no man knows

(Rev 19:12). By continuing to pronounce the Tetragrammaton, the person denies that Jesus was God ... the previous sentences are easy to read without comprehending what the words mean: when *the Logos*, the *Eloah* that Moses and the elders of Israel saw on Sinai, entered His creation as His only begotten Son, the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* ceased to exist in the heavenly realm. The side-by-side relationship between *Yah* and the Ancient of Days was broken by *Yah* entering His creation. The relationship between *Yah* and the Ancient of Days that had been likened to the marriage relationship between a man and his wife was no more, but was replaced by a relationship likened to that of a father and his firstborn son. The relationship went from being like two hands held together side-by-side to being one hand atop the other.

In Hebrew, the word for God is “*El*” as in *El Shaddai*, or God Almighty (Gen 17:1). Aspirated breath is represented by the consonant “*H*.” Thus, *Eloah* is the transliteration from Hebrew into English for “*El* + aspirated breath (*h*)”, and remembering that Moses and the elders saw “*Eloah*,” the name or title [God] is numerically singular.

Elohim is [*El* + *h*] + [*El* + *h*] an indeterminable number of times from the linguistic icon alone. It is from the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* that the number two is assigned to *Elohim*. *YHWH* breaks down into two radicals: *YH* or *Yah*, and *WH*, with the Hebrew *waw* [the third letter of the Tetragrammaton] written as either as a “*W*” or as a long “*U*” (the letter “*W*” is pronounced as “double-u” rather than as a long “*U*”), seen in script as a “*V*.” [Interestingly, “*U*” was written as a “*V*” for centuries, so a “double-u” would be written as “*V*” + “*V*” or “*W*”—and the Hebrew letter *waw*, now, discloses additional information about the Father and the Son, for in the second radical of the Tetragrammaton is the spiritual relationship of the Father and the Son.]

The Tetragrammaton was not pronounced by Israel in remembered history. Jesus did not pronounce the Tetragrammaton, but used *Adonai/Adoni* when addressing God or man as Lord. And the Tetragrammaton should not be pronounced, for the relationship represented by the Tetragrammaton no longer exists. To attempt to pronounce the Tetragrammaton is to utter blasphemy against the Father and the Son by asserting that the relationship still exists, that *the Logos* did not enter His creation as His only Son.

The Apostle John was, when writing his Gospel, refuting specific individuals that had begun to claim that Jesus was not God before His birth, but became God by living a perfect life, making it possible for anyone who lives a perfect life to become God, a teaching that repudiates the necessity of Calvary. This position was rightly rejected in the 2nd-Century, but in rejecting one errant teaching, Christendom accepted another, that God was one individual not one house, as the “house of Chanel” is one house consisting of designers, seamstresses, and perfume makers.

Because of timelessness, God is one. The Father and the Son are one. Disciples are one with the Father and the Son if they walk as Jesus walked. But disciples are not Jesus, the First of the firstfruits, the firstborn of many brothers (Rom 8:29). Nevertheless, each disciple is one with Jesus and with the Father if the disciple looks like Jesus (is a fractal image of Jesus).

The fundamentals of Christendom hold that *the Logos* entered His creation as His only Son to be born as the man Jesus of Nazareth, that He received a second life when the divine breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] descended upon Him as a dove, that He was crucified at Calvary and was raised from the grave after the third day by the Father, that He is now in heaven, seated at the right hand of the Father, and that His disciples

who hear His words and believe the Father will rise from the dead and be seated to His right hand, making them seated at the Father's left hand and making the Son and His Bride facing the Father. But for the person who denies that *the Logos* entered His creation, none of what follows will occur: the person will experience the second death.

What does it mean to be *Born Again*?

I.

In Luke's gospel, Jesus is twice asked what a person must do to inherit everlasting life (*cf.* Luke 10:25; 18:18), and His response both times pertained to the law. Asking about what is required to "inherit" implies the person knows that he or she does not then possess what will be inherited. The concept of a person being physically born with eternal life is contrary to Scripture (an immortal soul is eternal life). Everlasting life is the gift of God (Rom 6:23), given when the person is born of spirit. Prior to being born of spirit, the person only has the life given to the first Adam, this life making the person a breathing creature, a *nephesh*, like other *nephesh* that are the beasts of the field.

Solomon wrote,

I said in my heart *with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are but beasts*. For what happens to the children of man and what happens to the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts, for all is vanity. All go to one place. All are from the dust, and to dust all returns. (Eccl 3:18–20 emphasis added).

Solomon understood that God tests men and women to show them that they are but beasts, and that they are like other beasts in life and death. God tests them against the then widely accepted belief of Egypt that men are born with immortal souls that place them in a different biological category from the beasts of the field; that the fate of, at least, the Pharaohs was to be stars in heaven.

When God brought Abram [Abraham] outside and had him look towards the heavens to number the stars (Gen 15:5), God was working against the expectations of Egypt, a type of this world and the beliefs of all humankind. Abraham's descendants were to be like the stars. It wasn't the few Egyptian pharaohs that were to be stars, but the many sons of Abraham. The angels of God—His sons—are called "morning stars" (Job 38:7). Lucifer is the fallen "Day Star" (Isa 14:12). The sons of Abraham are to be as numerous as the stars, but they are to be like the angels (Luke 20:36) in that they will be sons of God who do not die.

The human body is a tent of flesh that is subject to corruption, decay, and death. Flesh and blood (the life of the flesh) cannot enter heaven (1 Cor 15:50), for there is nothing about the body that can withstand the fire that separates the dimensions, fire typified by the "flaming sword that turned every which way" (Gen 4:24). There is nothing inherent about flesh that can withstand being tormented forever in the lake of fire. The body can be reduced to ashes in any crematorium. It will, otherwise, return to dust unless preservation by freezing or drying causes it to remain as lifeless meat and bone.

If the flesh can be burned to ashes or will return to dust, then the flesh lacks permanence. If the breath of humankind is the same as the breath of beasts, then as one dies so dies the other ... Solomon denies that human beings have immortal souls. He asks who is it that knows that the spirit [Heb: *ruwach* — breath] of man goes upward

and the breath of a beast goes down into the earth (Eccl 3:21). The answer is that no one knows this. And this is the point about which God tests the righteous and the wicked.

II.

The Apostle Paul said that eternal life was the gift of God, given by the God “in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23). Eternal life does not come from a person’s human father, but from God. It doesn’t come in any way except through receiving the spirit of God, which gives to the person a second birth, a birth from above as a son of God, a birth that changes the person from being like other beasts by making the person tripart: body [σῶμα—*soma*], breath [ψυχὴ—*psuche*], and spirit [πνεῦμα—*pneuma*].

When a person is born of a human father and mother, the person is a son of disobedience (Eph 2:2–3), consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32) as a bondservant to sin (Rom 6:67). The person is not free to keep the commandments of God—even the most pious son of disobedience must break a commandment of God, and breaking one commandment makes the person a lawbreaker, a sinner (James 2:10). This person is numbered among the wicked of the world.

- For those individuals who claim to be Christians yet have not truly been born of Spirit, the one commandment most often broken is the Sabbath commandment.
- For pious Jews the commandment most often broken is the third commandment, for rabbinical Judaism claims to be “Israel” whereas rabbinical Judaism is uncircumcised of heart (Jer 9:25–26) so thus takes God’s name in vain, denying that the *Logos*, who entered His creation as the man Jesus of Nazareth, was the creator of all that has been made.

Jesus’ disciples had not yet received the Holy Spirit when Jesus sent the Twelve not to Gentiles, but to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt 10:6). Thus He told them to fear the One who can kill body [σῶμα—*soma*] and breath [ψυχὴ—*psuche*] ... what is translated into English as “soul” [*psuche*] is the life sustaining *breath* that all breasts of the field have, the *breath* that King Solomon said was the same for man and beast. Thus, according to Jesus, the Twelve consisted of or were only body [*soma*] and shallow breath [*psuche*] (v. 28). God says the life of beasts is in the blood (Gen 9:4–5; cf. Acts 15:20), which carries oxygen, received through the breath of the animal, to every cell in the animal. The life of physical beings is sustained by the cellular oxidation of sugars as the life of spirit beings comes from and is sustained by the spirit of God, which is metaphorically named in Greek as πνεῦμα—*pneuma*, wind or deep breath [moving air, or an invisible force].

The son of disobedience who has a body of flesh [*soma*] has his or her physical life sustained by physical or shallow breath [*psuche*], but when this son of disobedience is born of the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον], a second life sustaining force enters the person, the divine breath of God [πνεῦμα ἅγιον]. The person is now tripart as Paul identifies disciples when he writes, “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit [πνεῦμα] and soul [ψυχὴ] and body [σῶμα] be kept blameless” (1 Thess 5:23).

It is the wicked—those who have not experienced a second birth—that believe they have everlasting life without receiving this life from God.

- To teach that human beings have everlasting life apart from receiving it as the gift of God through Christ Jesus is to utter blasphemy against the Father and the Son.
- An immortal soul is everlasting life, and any teaching that a person is physically born with eternal life is contrary to Scripture.
- Everlasting life comes to human beings only as the gift of God, given when the person is born of spirit.
- Prior to being born of spirit, the person only has the life given to the first Adam, this life making the person a breathing creature, a nephesh, like other nephesh that are the beasts of the field.

It is not biblical to believe that humankind, prior to being born of Spirit, have life that differs from the lives of beasts; nevertheless, Augustine of Hippo wrote,

This faith [Christianity] maintains, and it must be believed: neither the soul nor the human body may suffer complete annihilation, but the impious shall rise again into everlasting punishment, and the just into life everlasting. (*On Christian Doctrine*. Book 1: XXI. Trans. D.W. Robertson, Jr.)

Augustine was simply wrong. Whether he knew he taught a lie probably cannot be determined, but he neither understood Scripture nor believed Scripture. The body is dust, the base elements of the earth. At death it returns to dust that is blown about by the winds of his earth. It is stone ground into fine flour; thus, the physical body is a shadow and type of cereal grains (that have inherent life within them) being ground into fine flour, with disciples typologically identified as the harvest of firstfruits, the early barley harvest, with Christ Jesus being the First of the firstfruits, the Wave Sheaf Offering.

Jesus said, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:23-24). Jesus was that grain of wheat—and the kingdom of heaven grows from this single grain of wheat.

Again, the Apostle Paul says that the wages of sin is death, “but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23). Jesus said of the Twelve He sent out that they were *psuche* and *soma*, breath and body (Matt 10:28). These first disciples had not, when sent out, received birth-from-above in the form of receipt of the Holy Spirit; they did not have the Holy Spirit. Hence, they were not of tripart composition. They lacked having the spirit [*pneuma*] of God. They lacked having eternal life. Jesus, Himself, lacked having the divine breath of God (πνεῦμα [τοῦ] θεοῦ — Matt 3:16) prior to it descending upon Him as a dove.

The person who dies without having been born anew is not today in hell, withering in pain, roasting in flames not quite hot enough to burn the person to ashes. The person who dies without being born of spirit in the person’s physical lifetime—and this will be most of humankind—awaits resurrection from the dead in the dust of the earth. Salvation lies ahead of this person, not behind.

The Apostle Paul writes,

For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law ... 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. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while

their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. (Rom 2:12, 14–16)

The person who does not have the law of God written on the person's heart and mind is a person *without the law*. This person will perish without the law, or will be saved by having done what the law requires—and what the law requires isn't legalistically keeping the commandments day by day, but exercising justice and mercy and love toward neighbor and God. The person who does not know God—the Chinese peasant who died centuries before Christ Jesus was born—nevertheless knew to exercise justice and mercy and love. Whether that Chinese peasant did or didn't exercise justice and mercy will be known when he or she is resurrected in the great White Throne Judgment. The peasant will then be like one of the two thieves crucified with Christ at Calvary (Luke 23:39–43).

- Every person who has drawn breath will be like one or the other of the two thieves crucified with Jesus.
- The disciple, today, either wants Jesus to save his or her physical life, or the disciple is willing to die for his or her sins, asking only that Jesus remember the person.
- Most disciples want to live as Gentiles but be remembered as Christians—

Most disciples want to save the lives they had as sons of disobedience while receiving the promise given to the ones willing to lay down their lives for Christ and live as spiritual Judeans.

The above sentence cannot be too strongly emphasized: the promise of eternal life is given to the person who willingly rebels against the lawlessness of this world by keeping the commandments; by practicing love, mercy, and justice; by walking as Jesus walked; by living as a Judean when not obliged to do so by culture and geography.

Again, the world is today divided between those human beings who have been called by God and born of Spirit as fruit ripening out of season, and between those who remain as sons of disobedience. The Christian is outwardly like the fig tree upon which Jesus looked for figs before it was the season for fruit—if Jesus finds no fruit, the tree is cursed, will wither, and will die the second death.

III.

The *Law of Moses* held covenants that promised eternal life: the lawyer who sought to test Jesus asked, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life” (Luke 10:25). This lawyer knew that he did not have eternal life dwelling within him in the form of an immortal soul that must be redeemed. Rather, this lawyer, who correctly answered Jesus' response of how did he read the law, understood that *the Law of Moses* held covenants that promised eternal life. Likewise, the rich young ruler asked Jesus, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life” (Luke 18:18). And according to the Apostle Paul, the offense of circumcision had been abolished at Calvary so that the physically uncircumcised could be brought near (or into) these covenants of promise ... no one can be brought near to a covenant that has been abolished, nor are better promises added to a covenant that has been abolished. An abolished covenant doesn't receive a new mediator.

God tests Israel with the *Law of Moses*: the covenants of promise in the *Law of Moses* were made with the fleshly descendants of the first Adam; they were made with

living dust. These covenants promised everlasting life, but on the condition of demonstrated obedience, with this everlasting life to be inherited, not then possessed.

Obedience as a test is “passed” when the person being tested submits by faith to the test. Thus, God tests Israel with *the Law of Moses* to determine what Israel believes about everlasting life—and this tests separates sheep from goats, spiritually circumcised Israel from the synagogue of Satan. For the last Eve believed the same lie that the first Eve believed: “the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die’” (Gen 3:4). Greek philosophers said to all who would hear them, “You will not surely die for you have an immortal soul.” And Catholic Churches (Greek and Roman) borrowed from these philosophers the concept that would keep them bondservants of the spiritual king of Babylon until the end of the age. Even the Churches of God, believing Satan’s lie differently, said, “The Body of Christ will never die,” and these Churches of God searched history for any fellowship that might have kept the Sabbath between 325 CE and 1525 CE, wrongly assigning Sabbath observance to various Sunday-observing fellowships so that the lie believed could be used to justify a wrong understanding of biblical prophecy.

If eternal life is the gift of God—and this is the claim of Scripture—and if God must “raise” the dead who were then audibly hearing the words Jesus spoke about the Father raising the dead (John 5:18–19, 21), and if the dead hearing Jesus’ words would believe the One who sent Him and thereby pass from death to life (v. 24), then Pharisees in the 1st-Century CE had no immortal soul but were numbered among the dead of this world even though they were physically breathing. Thus, the person who claims to have everlasting life apart from actually being born of spirit is a liar. This person believes and propagates the lie of that old serpent, Satan the devil, and as such is of Satan. *So it can be said with certainty that the person who claims to be born of spirit, but who continues to believe that human beings are physically born with an immortal soul has not actually experienced spiritual birth*—if this person were truly born of spirit, he or she would know the difference between a “feeling of faith” or a “religious experience” or last night’s indigestion and what it truly means to be born anew; for the person would cease his or her hostility to God and would earnestly desire to keep the commandments of God, all of them, not eight or nine of them. *Every person born of spirit and circumcised of heart will, in this era, keep the commandments by faith.* Evidence of having a circumcised heart is the journey of faith that will have the person keeping the commandments of God.

Grace, now, is the covering of obedience—not the obedience of the newly born son of God, but the obedience of Christ Jesus. Grace is the covering of the righteousness of Christ; it is the mantle or garment of Christ that is put on daily as physically circumcised Israel killed the daily sacrifice. It is the obedience that covers the childish spiritual disobedience that is visibly revealed through the physical maturation process of human infants.

The person who has not been born of spirit is not covered by Grace, but remains a son of disobedience and has his or her lawlessness covered by being the bondservant of Satan. Thus, the person not born of spirit is covered by natural grace, in that his or her disobedience will not be reckoned against the person (Rom 5:13), but this person will nevertheless die and be no more until resurrected in the great White Throne Judgment. It is in this final resurrection when everyone who has drawn breath and who was not called to be of the firstfruits will be “born” (as in receiving breath) a second time.

Disciples as former sons of disobedience (Eph 2:2–3), previously consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32) from their birth by water because of the disobedience of the first Adam, receive a second birth and a second life when they receive the Holy Spirit, the divine breath of the Father. This second life is invisible in this world, for it is of heaven and from heaven, that supra-dimensional realm beyond the bottomless pit.

In Scripture, the Holy Spirit is only seen when it is being used to create a physical shadow and copy of a spiritual event. Thus, the first time it is seen in the gospels (when it appears as a dove) creates the model for how humankind will be born of spirit. The next time it is physically manifested it is heard and seen in Acts chapter 2, when it forms the shadow and copy of the world being baptized in spirit halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation and of the world being baptized in fire at the coming of the new heaven and new earth (*cf.* Matt 3:11; Joel 2:28; Rev 21:1).

The audibility of the Holy Spirit being manifested on that day of Pentecost following Calvary also formed the shadow and copy of the empowerment and liberation of Israel (a nation circumcised of heart and not the natural nation descended from the patriarch) from indwelling sin and death at the beginning of the seven endtime years. But of most practical importance, the physical manifestation of the disciples being baptized in spirit signified that the Holy Spirit had been given to Israel: no longer was it necessary for the spirit to be directly transferred from disciple to disciple. Thus, the same manifestation of the spirit occurring in the house of Cornelius (when Cornelius and his household were *baptized* in spirit) signified that the Holy Spirit had been given to Gentiles. Therefore, the same manifestation of the spirit seen when the twelve converted Israelites are rebaptized by Paul (Acts 19:1–7) forms the shadow and copy of the spirit being given to the 144,000 Observant Jews coming out of the first half of the seven endtime years: these 144,000 converts from the twelve tribes will follow Jesus wherever He leads (Rev 14:1–5). They will receive the Holy Spirit following demonstrated faith and obedience during the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years. No one will need to lay hands on them for them to receive the spirit and birth from above.

The Holy Spirit is not now seen when disciples are born of spirit; the Holy Spirit will not be seen when disciples are liberated from indwelling sin and death at the beginning of the seven endtime years. It will not be seen when it is poured out upon all flesh when the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Father and the Son (*cf.* Rev 11:15; Dan 7:9–14). However, because of the importance of the Holy Spirit being poured out on all flesh when spiritual Babylon falls and the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man, heavenly signs (blood, fire, columns of smoke, the sun becoming dark, the moon appearing as blood) will mark or signify that the world has been baptized in spirit, thereby causing all of humankind to be born of spirit.

Grace ends when a person is liberated from the indwelling sin and death. This means that when Israel is empowered or filled with spirit, Israel will no longer be under grace: the Son of Man will be “revealed” or disrobed (Luke 17:30). For when sin that has resided in the fleshly members of Israel (Rom 7:21–25) is no longer within the fleshly tent or tabernacle of the person, there will no longer be a reason for Christ Jesus to “cover” His disciples with His righteousness. No longer will Christ Jesus hate the things that His Body does as the law of God within Paul’s mind hated the things that Paul’s fleshly members did (*v.* 15). But because He has hated the things that His Body did, He will deliver liberated disciples into the hand of the man of perdition for the destruction

of the flesh as Paul commanded that the saints at Corinth deliver the man who was with his father's wife into the hand of Satan (1 Cor 5:5).

The concept that Jesus, as the glorified Head of the Christ, hates the things that the Body of Christ does as Paul hated the very things that he did, doing not what he desired to do but doing what he condemned, has not been understood by the Church. The common teaching is that Jesus loves every disciple—but He doesn't love what each disciple does just as Paul didn't love those things that the members of his body did. Every person is individually and collectively the Body of Christ, and by extension every person is Christ, with the law of God in the person's inner being representing the Head of Christ, the glorified Jesus of Nazareth; so disciples can see themselves as Christ sees them by looking at how Paul saw his fleshly members.

The Body of Christ will live again when disciples are liberated from indwelling sin and death. If these disciples then take sin back inside themselves, they will have committed blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. They will die the second death in the lake of fire.

Unfortunately, the majority of disciples will return to lawlessness when liberated from indwelling sin and death.

Some disciples will die as their fellow saints were martyred (Rev 6:9–11), but most will rebel against God in the great falling away (2 Thess 2:3). This majority of disciples will return to lawlessness, thereby committing blasphemy against the Holy Spirit which had just liberated them from bondage to sin and death. And the point of law that this majority will break first—before murdering their righteous brothers—is the Sabbath commandment, for the lawless one (i.e., the man of perdition) will attempt to change times and the law (Dan 7:25). The mystery of lawlessness that was already at work when Paul yet lived is evident every Sunday.

Grace cannot be sold; it cannot be bartered; it cannot be stored up. It is the reality of natural Israel's twice daily sacrifice of a lamb. It is the putting on of Christ's righteousness; it is the mercy of the Father, who sent *the Logos* into *the Logos'* creation to die on the cross, thereby fulfilling all righteousness. And this putting on of Christ's righteousness will end when Israel is liberated from sin and death, and Israel's obedience will end 2,300 evening and mornings [days] before the sanctuary is restored to its rightful state (Dan 8:14). The great falling away will be far greater than Christendom now imagines; for two sons struggle in the womb of the living Isaac, one hated, one loved, even though no sin is imputed to either because both are covered by grace (Rom 9:6–13). But in the hated son, the mystery of lawlessness is fully manifest.

Baptism

I.

On that day of Pentecost following Calvary, the disciples were gathered together, and there came from heaven the sound like a mighty rushing, violent wind [πνοῆς—*pnoes*] that filled the whole house, thereby immersing or submerging the disciples in “spirit—πνεῦμα” ... the English word “baptize” comes from the Greek word “*baptizein*—βαπτισθεῖς/ν,” meaning to dip or to submerge. Thus, *to baptize* in water is to dip into or to submerge in water as the world was submerged in water in the days of Noah; *to baptize* in spirit (i.e., the breath of God) is to dip or to submerge in spirit as the world was submerged in water in the days of Noah; thus, *to baptize* with fire is to submerge the world in fire as the world was submerged in water. And John the Baptist said, “I baptize [βαπτίσει] you with water for repentance,” but Jesus, who would come after John, will “baptize [βαπτίσει] with πνεύματι ἁγίῳ [spirit or breath holy]” and fire (Matt 3:11). Therefore, three baptisms exist: one with water, one with spirit, one with fire.

On that day of Pentecost, devout Jews “from every nation under heaven” heard the first disciples speak as the spirit “gave them utterance” (Acts 2:4–5). These devout Jews were perplexed in that each heard what was said in the language of their nation. Peter then spoke, and some of these devout Jews “were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’” (vv. 37–38).

Physical repentance equates to spiritual forgiveness of sin; for repentance requires that the old self stop what it has been doing, turn, and go in the opposite direction, effectively ending the old self’s life as it has been lived. Repentance of disobedience is obedience, the reasonable expectation of every Israelite who has the commandments of God. And with obedience comes “life”; hence death reigned from Adam to Moses, for Moses describes obedience and its expectations.

John’s baptism was for repentance; baptism in the name of Jesus Christ was for the forgiveness of sin. The Holy Spirit was/is given as the free gift of the Father.

Baptism for the forgiveness of sin is, now, the inclusionary rite of Christendom. With baptism, a person becomes a member of the household of God, upon which judgment has come (1 Pet 4:17). Baptism in water symbolically represents the death of the old self or nature. The new creature that is born of spirit as a son of God is born under no condemnation (Rom 8:1–2). Therefore with the death of the old self, sins are forgiven. The record of debt that had stood against the person is canceled—the old self’s death cancels this record of debt. The old self’s death becomes true repentance. And the putting to death of the old self was what Israel couldn’t do as a nation under the law but still consigned to disobedience.

In the days of Noah, the unrighteousness and ungodliness (the wickedness) of humankind grieved God, who regretted that He had made man (Gen 6:5–6). He determined that He would blot out all living things (v. 7), so He baptized the world unto death by bringing a flood of water over the face of the earth ... baptism by water is

baptism into death. Likewise, baptism by spirit is baptism into life and baptism by fire is baptism into glory.

When the Son of Man is revealed or unclothed, a time like that of Noah's age shall again be upon the earth. Only the Lord has promised not to again baptize the world into death by bringing another flood. He will instead baptize the world into life by submersing the world in spirit, which filled the room with the sound of a mighty rushing wind on that day of Pentecost almost two millennia ago. And all men [humankind] from every nation will hear the words of the Lord in their own language; for all will be born of spirit, and born filled with or empowered by the Holy Spirit. No longer will anyone be consigned to disobedience so all who endure to the end shall be saved.

Baptism has not been understood by Christendom: the usual teaching is that being *born of water* (John 3:5) means "being baptized," but this would make baptism a prerequisite for being born of spirit—and Scripture does not support this teaching, for clearly Cornelius was empowered by the spirit before He was baptized.

- Baptism is for the forgiveness of sin, with this forgiveness coming through the death of the old self or old nature or old man.
- A person of the nations [a Gentile], unlike a natural Israelite, was not under the law and had no access to the promise of inheriting eternal life and did not seek God. This person was far from the covenants of promise.
- A Gentile had no reason to cease living as a Gentile, believing myths and fables about an after death afterlife.
- Therefore, when the offense of circumcision was abolished in the personhood of Christ Jesus and salvation was offered to Gentiles, who had no interest in the Lord, the Holy Spirit was given prior to repentance.
- For Gentiles, receipt of the Holy Spirit preceded baptism and the death of the old self and the forgiveness of sin.
- But receipt of the Holy Spirit (i.e., being born of spirit) is not a guarantee of salvation.

A concept that the Christian Church has overlooked for far too long is that since Cornelius receipt of the Holy Spirit precedes the death of the old self and the forgiveness of sin. No one far from the Lord (metaphorically, living in a far land — Deut 30:1) will come to the Lord unless the Father makes a first overture by drawing the person from this world (John 6:44, 65), and the Father draws a person by giving the person the earnest of the Holy Spirit ... earnest money given on a real estate contract is real money, just not the full amount of the purchase price. And earnest money is returned if the contract offer is rejected. Likewise, when the Father draws a person the Father gives the person real spiritual life in the inter-dimensional realm; the person has been born of spirit. But the person is spiritually as a newly born Hebrew male infant, who won't be circumcised until the eighth day, was physically. Until the person who has been drawn by the Father from this world undertakes a journey of faith equivalent to the patriarch Abraham's physical journey of faith, the heart will not be cleansed so that it can be circumcised. Thus, the Gentile to whom the Father has given the earnest of the spirit—this Gentile will either make a journey of faith and begin to live as a Judean (a Galilean) and thereby have his or her heart circumcised, or this Gentile will continue to live as a Gentile and as earnest money is returned when a purchase offer is rejected, the spiritual life received dies of spiritual SIDS. This son of God dies before the person is spiritually circumcised and comes under judgment. Unfortunately, too often this spiritual infant of

less that eight days of age begins to teach others even when it is spiritually dead—and it teaches other newly born spiritual infants to continue living as Gentiles.

Nicodemus recognized Jesus as a teacher come from God, but without a recorded question being asked by Nicodemus, “Jesus answered him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God’” (John 3:3–5) ... if John’s recounting of this exchange were stopped here, it might be possible to argue that Cornelius and his household were exceptions to the rule that baptism precedes being born of spirit. But the account doesn’t stop here. Rather, Jesus goes on to say, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (v. 6). And the juxtaposition is being born of water means to be born of flesh, whereas to be born of spirit is to be born again, or born from above.

Jesus adds, “Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You [plural — “you” is plural throughout this passage] must be born again.’ The wind [πνεῦμα] blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit [πνεῦμα]” (John 3:7–8).

The new creature that is born of spirit is not the fleshly body of the person, but a “creature” like the self-awareness that imparts personhood to a human being. Since the empowerment of Cornelius, baptism is not a necessary prerequisite for either a natural Israelite or a Gentile to receive a second birth through receiving the Holy Spirit. Rather, what is seen is that baptism is for the death of the old self or old nature who was a bondservant of the prince of this world.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 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 6:1–4)

What disciple has physically died to sin so that he or she is without sin? Paul will go on to write that his fleshly members still served the law of sin and death (Rom 7:13–25), so baptism isn’t to the death of a disciple’s fleshly members but only to the death of the old “personhood” or self-awareness that causes one person to behave differently than another person behaves ... every cat has characteristics common to all cats; every dog has characteristics common to all dogs. Yet each cat has its own personality as each dog has its own personality. Likewise, every human being has characteristics common to every human being; yet, each person is unique. So baptism isn’t to the death of the flesh, but to the death of the old self or old nature that was consigned to disobedience because of the sin of the first Adam. It isn’t the flesh that is buried into a death like that of Christ Jesus at baptism, but the self-aware nature that imparts personhood to the human being. And it isn’t the flesh that is raised in newness of life when raised from the water, but the new creature or new nature that is like a Hebrew infant of eight days of age.

Paul continues:

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was

crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

The fleshly body or tabernacle of a disciple is not crucified as Jesus was crucified; only the old self or old nature (a non-physical attribute of a human being—the attribute that imparts personhood) is crucified with Christ and thus set free from sin. The flesh is not yet set free: a ransom has to be paid before the flesh is set free from sin.

All firstborns belong to God, who can use them as He chooses. In Egypt where Israel as the firstborn son of God (Ex 4:22) was held in bondage by Pharaoh, king of Egypt, God gave the lives of Egyptian firstborns as the ransom price for His firstborn son (Isa 43:3). He will again give the lives of men—firstborns not covered by the blood of Christ—as the ransom price for Israel, now a nation circumcised of heart.

But Christendom holds that at Calvary Christ Jesus paid the ransom price necessary to redeem all of humanity. Paul wrote:

I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, *God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.* And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. (Gal 4:1–7 emphasis added)

Paul writes that God sent His Son to redeem those who were under the law—those who were under the law were Israelites, not the peoples of this world. The Son redeems Israel that Israel might receive adoption as sons, but Paul writes as if the redemption of those formerly under the law was the prerequisite for the Galatians being adopted by the Father as sons, a juxtaposition that would seem to ignore Israel’s redemption from Egyptian slavery. If redemption were of the flesh, Israel was redeemed when the nation left Egypt; Israel was redeemed under Moses, for death reigned from Adam to Moses (Rom 5:14), not from Adam to Christ Jesus, the second Adam. Thus, spiritual death reigns spiritually from Christ Jesus to the two witnesses, the two who will be like Moses and Aaron, their ministry to begin when Israel is liberated from indwelling sin and death.

Today, the Church is as Israel was in Egypt—and as Israel was “baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (1 Cor 10:2), the Church will be baptized into the ministry of the two witnesses by the empowerment of the spirit. And as Israel chafed at the bit of Moses, who brought to Israel the promise of inheriting eternal life, the Church will chafe at the bit of obedience and will rebel against God as Israel rebelled in the wilderness of Paran (Num chap 14).

The Church has already been baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19): this is the baptism unto the death of the old self, about which Paul writes, “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:27–28). The person who has been baptized into this baptism has been set free from sin; yet sin will continue to dwell in the person’s fleshly members. The person will remain male or female, Jew or Greek, free or bond. So this baptism isn’t into the death of the flesh or for the liberation of the flesh from indwelling sin and death. Rather, this baptism by water is unto the death of the old self or old nature that enlivens the flesh. If it were unto the death of the flesh, then the disciple would be “dead,” a corpse to be buried in a grave. There would be no need for grace; there would be no growth in grace and knowledge.

Therefore, the baptism that has significance for the flesh is not baptism by water, but baptism by spirit at the second Passover. This will be baptism into life, not unto death, for the fleshly body of every person was baptized unto death in the days of Noah. A disciple needs to do nothing for the disciple’s tent of flesh to perish.

II.

Because of misunderstandings engendered by Christendom teaching that being *born of water* meant baptism rather than human birth (i.e., born of the water of the womb), the Church was ripe for division stemming from the issue of adult baptism; for baptism replaces outward circumcision on the 8th-day as the inclusionary rite for admission in the spiritually circumcised nation of Israel. Wide acceptance of baptism as this inclusionary rite caused early Catholic churches (Greek and Roman) to sprinkle newly born human infants in a baptismal ceremony that was utterly without spiritual significance ... until the Father draws a person from this world (John 6:44, 65) and gives to the person a second life through receipt of His divine “breath,” the person has no life but that which came from the first Adam. The person has no immortal soul. So to baptize a person for the death of the old self before the person has been drawn and called by God is without meaning; the old self doesn’t die for there is no new self or new nature present in the person. All that has happened is the person gets wet; so even full immersion baptism of infants, children, or non-believers is meaningless. And sprinkling is not baptism.

Baptism after spiritual birth is an outward profession of faith that places the new self or new nature into the household of God, and by extension, puts the new self under judgment (1 Pet 4:17). Until baptized, a born-of-spirit son-of-God is neither a part of spiritual Israel, nor under judgment, but is as a Hebrew male infant of less than eight days of age was.

Because of the lawlessness of the early Church, God delivered the Church into the hand of the spiritual king of Babylon (Isa 14:4) as He delivered ancient Israel into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of earthly Babylon. Spiritual Jerusalem was without inhabitants for 1200 years (325 CE to 1525 CE) as earthly Jerusalem was without the temple for 70 years (586 BCE to 516 BCE) — disciples are the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16). And the means through which God kept the Church imprisoned in spiritual Babylon was through the death of the Body of Christ.

If the Body of Christ consists of all disciples who have been born of spirit and who have made a journey of faith comparable in distance to the patriarch Abraham’s

geographical journey of faith (Rom 4:11–12) — this spiritual or mental journey of faith cleanses the heart so that it can be circumcised — then death of the Body would come when no born of spirit disciple undertakes a journey of faith comparable to Abraham’s physical journey of faith. And to keep the Body dead, the Christian Church baptized infants ... sprinkling before spiritual birth is not baptism of the old self unto a death like Christ Jesus’.

If believers are not baptized after becoming believers, there will be no inhabitants in heavenly Jerusalem. If adult baptism is necessary, then centuries of infant baptism produced a spiritual condition analogous to Jerusalem being abandoned for seventy years after Nebuchadnezzar sacked the city a second time. Of equal importance, though, is the theological location of heavenly Jerusalem: as long as a person remains in spiritual Babylon, the person is far from heavenly Jerusalem. As long as a “Christian” continues to participate in the governance of this world, the person remains in spiritual Babylon. As long as a “Christian” continues to worship on Sunday rather than the Sabbath, the “Christian” remains in Babylon, for Sabbath observance marks when a disciple enters into God’s presence or into His rest (*cf.* Heb 3:16–4:11; Ps 95:10–11; Num chap 14).

The geographical territory of ancient Judea is the shadow and type of 7th-Day Sabbath observance: to physically dwell in Judea equates to spiritually keeping the Sabbath. Therefore, an Israelite going to Jerusalem three seasons a year to observe the high Sabbaths equates to a spiritually circumcised disciple keeping the annual Sabbaths. No disciple who does not keep both the weekly Sabbath and the annual Sabbaths has spiritually reached heavenly Jerusalem, regardless of what the disciple contends.

In the 16th-Century, 1200 years after when Emperor Constantine called together the Council of Nicea (ca 325 CE), Swiss Reformers broke with the Roman Church ... as a physical decree went out to rebuild the temple of God in physical Jerusalem, a spiritual decree went out to rebuild the temple of God in the Jerusalem above. Both Reformers and Radicals heard this decree. Reformers wanted to rebuild the temple where they were in Babylon; they did not want to journey to spiritual Judea. After all, physical Israel had prospered in Babylon. What need was there to journey to the land Beyond the River? Why not stay where the nation was? But Radicals set out for spiritual Judea.

As if the journey to Judea were a sprint race, Swiss Radicals accepted the New Testament as their only rule of faith and practice, broke with Catholic tradition, and rejected Luther’s theory of forensic, solifidian justification, and the real presence. They believed it was possible to keep the law and to reach perfection. Hätzer and Denck doubted the doctrine of a triune deity. Some Radicals believed in the sleep of the soul between death and resurrection, a millennial reign of Christ, and final restoration. But the burning question was baptism: Radicals could not find infant baptism in the Bible, so they denounced it as an invention of popery. Baptism, they reasoned, presupposes instruction, faith, and conversion, which is impossible in the case of infants. (*History of the Christian Church, Volume VIII: "Modern Christianity. The Swiss Reformation"*)

A person must put the old self to death by baptism, represented typologically by the land of Haran where Abraham father Terah settled and died—this is the land of Assyria. If the disciple will not leave the old self, the disciple will never enter into God’s rest. The old self will continue to rule the fleshly tabernacle into which the infant son of God was born, and upon which judgment has come.

"The demand of rebaptism virtually unbaptized and unchristianized the entire Christian world, and completed the rupture with the historic Church. It cut the last cord of union of the present with the past" (*History—Vol. VIII*).

In the 16th Century, the Reformers aimed to reform the old Church by the Bible; the Radicals attempted to build a new Church from the Bible. The former maintained the historic continuity; the latter went directly to the apostolic age, and ignored the intervening centuries as an apostasy. (*History—Vol. VIII*)

No better statements can be made about what is today occurring within greater Christianity than the above citation. Historical exegesis maintains theological continuity back to the Council of Nicea (ca 325 CE), when Constantine, the unconverted Roman Emperor, determined what would be sound doctrine for the Church. Errors introduced into the teachings of the Church in the 1st through 4th Centuries have been continued through elevation of the traditions of men to the status of Holy Writ. These long held errors, embodied in the sentiment behind the lyrics of "Give Me That Old Time Religion," will cause many born-from-above saints to rebel against God when the lawless one is revealed (2 Thess 2:3). These many rebelling saints, in denominations coming from Protestant reform of the old Church by the Bible and from in-house reform of the old Church, will use historical exegesis to support arguments for practices and dogma developed within the old Church long before any reform occurred. These arguments will cause saints to attempt entering God's rest on the following day, Sunday, when no covering for sin exists but obedience—and God will, then, send a great delusion over the rebels so that they cannot repent (vv. 11-12). The rebels will be absolutely convinced that they alone represent the true Church, possessing the faith once delivered, and they will persecute endtime Radicals that have built a new Church from the Bible just as the Reformers hunted down and killed Radicals in the 16th and 17th Centuries.

For the past century, the Churches of God have sought to trace the history of the true Church through Sabbath observance. Thus, they assigned Sabbath observance to obscure religious factions that called Sunday the Sabbath, and they identified communities of crypto-Jews as factions of the true Church. Conversion of these crypto-Jews might or might not have been genuine, but it isn't by Sabbath observance that the true Church can be traced. Rather, it is through tracing the sacrament of baptism that history of the Church mirrors the history of the physically circumcised holy nation.

The physically circumcised nation of Israel didn't die out in Babylon, but thrived and prospered. Likewise, the born of spirit nation of Israel hasn't died out in spiritual Babylon, but has grown fat, soft and flabby. Only a remnant of the physical nation returned to Jerusalem. Only a remnant of the spiritual nation has returned to the Jerusalem above. And of the physical remnant that returned, only a remnant of this remnant accepted the deity of Jesus of Nazareth. Likewise, of the remnant of spiritual Israel that has returned to rebuild the temple of God, few will hear Jesus' voice and believe the One who sent Him. Many are called, but few are chosen (Matt 22:14). All have been invited to the wedding feast, but even among Sabbath-observing Christians, few strive for perfection; few strive to walk uprightly before God. Most behave as the Pharisees did—now that they have the Sabbath, they make an idol of it by making Sabbath observance the test of genuine discipleship. Break the Sabbath and the disciple is a "nominal Christian," an ugly identifying phrase that has an even uglier application. The phrase places all of the eighth day Church into the category of "the dead" (i.e., those who have never been quickened, or born of Spirit).

The mission field for the spiritual remnant that has returned to the Jerusalem above is the 8th-Day Church. The mission is recovery of genuine disciples who are currently being taught not to undertake the difficult journey to obedience, to God's rest, to Sabbath observance. These disciples are, instead, taught to erase the laws of God if, perchance, they are written on their hearts and put into their minds. And whereas the 16th-Century Swiss Radicals were unable to refute the arguments of Zwingli against the necessity of adult baptism, overturning Zwingli's arguments today is child's play. Thus, the task that *Philadelphia* faces is getting disciples to cover themselves with the Passover sacraments of Bread and Wine so that these disciples will live through the liberation of the spiritually holy nation from bondage to sin. Too few disciples take the sacraments as Jesus established the example.

The second Passover is approaching. Those disciples who have been on a long journey or who have been spiritually defiled by touching a dead body (themselves) can take the sacraments—and should.

"The first and chief aim of the (Swiss) Radicals was not (as is usually stated) the opposition to infant baptism, still less to sprinkling or pouring, but the establishment of a pure church of converts in opposition to the mixed church of the world. The rejection of infant baptism followed as a necessary consequence. They were not satisfied with separation from popery; they wanted a separation from all the ungodly. They appealed to the example of the disciples in Jerusalem, who left the synagogue and the world" (*History—Vol. VIII*).

From the early Swiss Radicals come today's Sabbatarian Christians. The spiritual lineage is direct. And as the State Churches drove the Radicals from place to place, so too will Sabbatarian Christians be driven from place to place once the seven, endtime years of tribulation begin. If the Sabbatarian loves that portion of the world where he or she presently resides, the person will lose his or her physical life there; for the gospel will be spread during the Tribulation as it was spread by Swiss Anabaptists.

Philadelphia follows in and goes far beyond the steps of the 16th-Century Sabbatarian Anabaptists, especially the steps of Andreas Fischer.

Baptism is the voluntary putting to death of the old self, thereby allowing judgment to come upon the born-from-above son of God that is a member of the household of God. Death precedes judgment (Heb 9:27), and judgment is today on the household of God (1 Pet 4:17). Physical circumcision occurred on the eighth day. A Hebrew infant lived a week before being circumcised. But a spiritual week is not linked to the passing of time.

Who or What Nation is Endtime Israel?

I.

The unrighteousness and ungodliness of humankind was great in the days of Noah, and it grieved God that He had made man (Gen 6:5–6), and God determined that He would blot out all living things (v. 7); so He baptized the world unto death by bringing a flood of water over the whole face of the earth. Yet Noah, a preacher of righteousness, found favor with God (vv. 8–9) and through him, eight were saved. From these eight came the generations born after the flood, these generations consigned or concluded to disobedience (Rom 11:32) and death (Rom 5:12–14) because of Adam’s lawlessness.

In typology, the eight represent Christ and the seven angels to the seven churches. The seven pairs of “clean” animals represent the seven churches. The single pair of every other animal is typified by Caleb, a son of Esau.

After the Flood unrighteousness continued to reign over humankind through unbelief, but in the patriarch Abraham [then named Abram] God found faith: Abraham believed God and this belief by faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness (Gen 15:6). It wasn’t the works of Abraham (Rom 4:2–5), who kept the commandments, laws, and statutes of God (Gen 26:5), but the faith that Abraham displayed in first leaving his father and journeying to an unknown land then believing God that his heirs would be as the stars of heaven that was counted to him as righteousness. Because of his faith, Abraham became the chosen human cultivar [cultivated variety] of God—and God propagated Abraham’s offspring by promise for two generations (Gen 17:16; 25:21) as an orchardist would propagate a fruiting cultivar until certain that the cultivar would produce the desired fruit.

Isaac and Isaac’s sons Esau and Jacob were born by promise of God, and not as wild seedlings of the flesh. But while still in the womb, Esau was hated and Jacob loved (Mal 1:2; Rom 9:12–13), but God hating an infant in the womb makes no sense if both Esau and Jacob are not types of the spiritual peoples that would be born by promise to the spiritual Isaac (Gal 4:28–31), who was also born by promise.

The Apostle Paul established the basis for typologically reading the Church as spiritual Isaac, and it is this reading of Isaac as a type of the Church prior to the birth of two sons of promise which confirms that endtime Israel is not the physically circumcised descendants of the patriarch Israel.

The above cannot be emphasized too much: the Apostle Paul wrote that since Calvary, “[N]o 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 2:28–29). Elsewhere Paul wrote, “In him [Christ Jesus] also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh, by the circumcision of Christ” (Col 2:11). And in the Moab covenant mediated by Moses, the Lord [YHWH] told the mixed nation of circumcised and uncircumcised Israelites³ that,

³ The children of the nation that left Egypt (those not counted in the census of Numbers chapter 1) were circumcised in Egypt and did not die in the wilderness as their fathers died, but the children born to Israel in the wilderness were not circumcised (Josh 5:2–7); nor was the mixed multitude that left Egypt

And when all of these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, and return to the Lord your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and all your [*nephesh*] ... the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your [*nephesh*], that you may live. (Deut 30:1–2, 6)

When in a far land, it would take an act of faith for Israel to return to God, faith equivalent to Abraham's faith when he left his father in Haran to journey to Canaan. Physically circumcised Israel never returned to God by faith, but a person of *the nations* [Gentiles] who turns to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and by faith begins to keep the precepts of the law will have his or her physical uncircumcision counted as circumcision (Rom 2:26). The person who was once far from God and alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise (Eph 2:11–13) is brought near by the blood of Christ. This person is now part of the commonwealth of Israel; this person is an Israelite, one who has prevailed or overcome with God (Gen 32:28). And this person will keep the commandments of God as the reasonable expectation of the household of God (Deut 30:10).

The *Israel* of endtime biblical prophecies is not the physically circumcised nation, but the nation that has circumcised hearts, with some of this nation also being outwardly circumcised and some only being inwardly uncircumcised.

The Moab covenant does not form merely the visible copy and type of the new covenant that has the laws of God written on hearts and placed in minds, but it is the spiritual covenant to which better promises were added and its mediator changed from Moses to Christ Jesus ... implementation of the new covenant by which all will *know the Lord* begins with Israel implementing the Moab covenant.

Israel does not cease to be as a nation when circumcision moves from being of the outer man to being of the inner man, born of spirit as a son of God. This new creature is housed in a tabernacle or tent of flesh; so the following correspondences exist—

- Circumcision of the foreskin is physical and as such precedes and serves as the copy and type of circumcision of the heart.
- The physically circumcised Israelite in a house in Egypt precedes and serves as a copy and type of the spiritually circumcised Israelite [i.e., the new creature born of Spirit] in a tent of flesh.
- The two doorposts and lintel of the physically circumcised Israelite's house in Egypt delineated the entryway into the house and as such correspond to the mouth of the tent of flesh in which the born of Spirit son of God dwells.
- Thus, the physically circumcised Israelite who, after smearing blood on doorposts and lintels, ate of a physical lamb roasted whole with fire serves as the copy and type of the spiritually circumcised Israelite who eats the flesh of the spiritual Lamb roasted over the fiery sins of Israel.

circumcised. Therefore, the covenant made on the plains of Moab was not made with a physically circumcised nation.

- For disciples, eating the unleavened bread that is or represents Christ’s body functions spiritually as eating the flesh of an actual lamb by a physically circumcised Israelite.

II.

In theological discussions, the term “supersessionism” (also called Replacement Theology) refers to the belief that the ancient nation of Israel is not endtime Israel; the Christian Church is. *Supersessionism* is generally rejected by disciples who, for whatever reason, need to theologically find scriptural references to a physically circumcised nation of Israel in biblical prophecies. But the “Christian” who rejects *supersessionism* does so from either ignorance or deliberate mutilation of Scripture. There are, of course, obvious reasons why rabbinical Judaism would reject *supersessionism*.

“Dispensationalism” rejects *supersessionism*, and *dispensationalists* argue, instead, for “restorationism,” a theological position coming from the argumentative assumption that God is a respecter of persons, offering one covenant to the Church and a different covenant to the Jews. Within Evangelical Christianity, most of which is based on *dispensationalism*, the formation of the modern state of Israel is central to prophecies about the recovery of Israel from the North Country (*cf.* Jer 16:14–15; 23:7–8; Ezek 20:34–36; 36:22–27; Isa 11:11–13 et al); thus, Evangelical Christianity locates humankind in the generic period known in Scripture as “the time of the end.”

However, the return of Jews from Germany, Poland, and Russian has not made anyone forget about the exodus from Egypt, and the promise of Jeremiah’s prophecies is that the recovery and endtime return of Israel will be so much greater in magnitude than Israel’s exodus that the exodus from Egypt will be forgotten (Jer 16:14–15; 23:7–8). Therefore, *restorationism* has, at its core, too small of a return from the North Country to satisfy endtime prophecies about Israel.

Another element of endtime Christendom that rejects *supersessionism* is the splintered Churches of God that cling to Herbert Armstrong’s prophetic teachings: Armstrong taught an aggressive form of British Israelism that identified the English-speaking peoples of the world as endtime Israel. In Armstrong’s version of British Israelism, the United States, Britain, Australia, Canada, South Africa would go into captivity (military defeat and occupation by a United Europe lead by Germany) and would then be liberated when Christ returned. Thus, those disciples who still hold to Armstrong’s version of British Israelism vehemently opposed any teachings that will have the Christian Church being endtime Israel—and they are wrong!

In typology, Egypt and the king of the south represent sin, while Assyria and the king of the North represent death. Between sin and death lies “life,” or Judea, which the Psalmist labels as God’s rest (Ps 95:10–11). In the exodus from Egypt, the adult nation counted in the census taken the second year (Num 1:1–3), with the exceptions of Joshua and Caleb, died in the wilderness because of its unbelief (*cf.* Num 14:11–12, 20–24, 28–34; Ps 95:10–11; Heb 3:19). This nation, when told that it was under sentence of death, outwardly repented (Num 14:40), but it could not enter God’s rest [or into life] on the following day. The writer of Hebrews makes the “rest” of God that disbelieving Israel could not enter [i.e., Canaan or Judea] the visible, physical type of entering into the Sabbath rest of God (Heb 3:16–4:11), with the promise of entrance standing open only for a while (specifically Heb 4:1). And as the nation that left Egypt could not enter into

Judea on the following day (Num 14:41–45), endtime Israel cannot enter into the rest of God on the following day, the 8th-day; so the Christian Church that is endtime Israel is not the Christian Church that worships on Sunday. Israel in Babylon was far from God, and the Church in spiritual Babylon is even farther from God.

III.

The Apostle Paul, writing about his natural kinsmen, says,

God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel? “Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.” But what is God’s reply to him? “I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. (Rom 11:2–6)

Elsewhere, Paul writes,

For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. 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. His praise is not from man but from God. (Rom 2:25–29)

Circumcision of the heart is by the spirit, and the first mention of circumcision of the heart is in the covenant mediated by Moses and made in Moab. By extension, Israel after Calvary includes the remnant of the physically circumcised nation foreshadowed by the seven thousand of Elijah’s day—this remnant is represented at Moab by the then-grown children of the nation that left Egypt, children too young to be counted in the census taken the second year. Israel after Calvary included those disciples upon whom Jesus breathed and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22), with receipt of the divine breath of God forming a nation of Israel that wasn’t before a nation (1 Pet 2:9–10), but is now a nation that has received mercy or grace.

The “uncircumcised” nation present at Moab when this everlasting second covenant was mediated by Moses (i.e., the uncircumcised children born in the wilderness, with these children circumcised after Israel crossed the Jordan and entered into God’s rest — Josh 5:2–7) foreshadowed uncircumcised Gentiles drawn from this world by the Father and given a second life through receipt of His divine breath. When these uncircumcised Gentiles keep the precepts of the law by faith, they will have their uncircumcision counted as circumcision. If, however, they do not keep the precepts of the law but voluntarily return to lawlessness, no further sacrifice remains for them. They willingly serve sin which leads to death (Rom 6:16); they are no longer under grace, but are under the law even if they were not before under the law.

- Moses only led Israel to the plains of Moab, where the choice of life and death is placed before the children of Israel who were not given a heart to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear what God was doing (Deut 29:4).

- Joshua/Jesus [Gr: Ἰησοῦς] led/leads Israel into God's rest (Ps 95:10–11), and into God's presence, what God's rest represents.
- Disciples must by faith keep the precepts of the law and profess that Jesus is Lord before they receive a heart to understand what God is doing.

God consigned all of humankind to disobedience so that He could have mercy on all, with this mercy extended initially to the firstfruits, the early barley harvest of Judea [the representation of "life"], then later to the main crop wheat harvest after the thousand years. Jesus was the First of the firstfruits. As such He was the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering, presented to God on the day after the Sabbath during Unleavened Bread (Lev 23:11). Disciples of Christ Jesus are also firstfruits. As sons of God born of spirit, disciples are the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27), and as the Body, disciples are also "Christ," making *Christ* not one man but one "temple."

IV.

Jeremiah's seventy years prophecy (29:10) that is usually interpreted to mean that after seventy years God would bring Israel back from Babylon to Jerusalem is not so simply fulfilled: yes, a remnant of Israel returned from Babylon to Jerusalem to rebuild the house of God by decree of Cyrus, king of Persia and Babylon, but the army of Nebuchadnezzar razed Jerusalem in 586 BCE. Temple reconstruction began in 539 BCE, meaning that a remnant of Israel returned from Babylon before the seventy years transpired. However, work on the temple was suspended, and the temple was not completed until 516 BCE, exactly seventy years after Solomon's temple was burned; so Jeremiah's seventy year prophecy either pertained to the temple or to a future fulfillment. It does not reflect natural Israelites' exile in Babylon, making natural Israel not the subject of Jeremiah's prophecy.

V.

Israel is called the firstborn son of *YHWH* (Ex 4:22); Israel is also the woman of Revelation 12:1, the woman who gives birth to a male child who will rule all nations with a rod of iron (Rev 12:5). The offspring of this woman, beginning with the male child caught up to heaven and extending through to the remnant of her offspring who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus, is *Christ* ... the woman is not *Christ*, but her offspring are. And the offspring of the woman take upon themselves the name "Israel," for they are of the woman.

The relationship between Israel as the firstborn son of *Yah*, and Israel as the firstborn son of the Father is comparable to the relationship between a woman and her daughter ... biological gender only pertains to this world and to the flesh; so the helpmate to God, Father or Son, is in the position of being a woman even though disciples are individually sons of God. If a person who is physically minded attempts to assign gender to a son of God, the person discloses his or her ignorance. Biological gender is the visible expression of a spiritual relationship. Hence, the Body of Christ that is presently one with Jesus through being His spiritual Body will—when liberated from indwelling sin and death, and delivered into the hand of the man of perdition and thus separated from Jesus—be the Bride of Christ at the Marriage Supper when glorified disciples are again "one" with the Bridegroom. For seven years, though, disciples are separated from Christ Jesus, with this separation useful in determining who really is of

God and who, by faith, will obey and serve God as a traditional wife obeys and serves her husband.

Note the above: the liberated woman of the Western world demands equality with her husband, and the liberated Body of Christ will demand equality with (or superiority over) God even though it was the woman who was deceived by the serpent—and who will again be deceived by that old serpent, Satan the devil. The great falling away (2 Thess 2:3) occurs because the offspring of the woman is deceived by the false prophet and the man of perdition working together to cause the offspring to rebel against God. Therefore, the martial relationship between a man and his wife can be likened to the relationship between the head and the body of an individual. And as the head and the body are flesh forming one person, so ought a man and his wife form one entity that can be likened to *YHWH*, in which two entities functioned as one God.

The independence of mind and spirit of women in the Western world will hinder disciples from perceiving the importance of “obedience” to God once Israel has been liberated from indwelling sin and death; for disciples are the offspring of Israel and as such are Israel even though it is the woman whom Satan initially pursues when he is cast from heaven (Rev 12:13). He only turns to make war with the remnant of her seed when she escapes from him.

- The woman of Revelation chapter 12 is Israel, so the woman exists and escapes from Satan halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation.
- The Church, beginning with Christ Jesus, is the offspring of the woman and as such is also Israel, the firstfruits of the Father, with Christ Jesus as the First of these firstfruits.
- Natural Israel is in this world what the Church is in the inter-dimensional heavenly realm.
- The person who looks for natural Israel to fulfill biblical prophecies that pertain to endtime Israel looks for a shadow to operate independently of the reality casting the shadow.

When the fullness of the Gentiles has been called as firstfruits (Rom 11:25), the liberation of spiritually circumcised Israel will occur; the second Passover will occur. And it is in this way that natural Israel, still loved for the sake of its ancestors, will be saved; for with the second Passover comes the revealing of the Son of Man (Luke 17:30) and the delivery of the saints into the hand of the man of perdition (Dan 7:25) for the destruction of the flesh so that the spirit might be saved when judgments are revealed. Then Sabbath observance will mark who is of God for this 1260 day period when spiritual Babylon, wobbled by one below the belt blow, reels and staggers. If Observant Jews will not give up Sabbath observance—and they will not do so—then they only have to profess that Jesus is lord and believe in their hearts that the Father raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 10:9) to be saved. They will, then, stand on the same spiritual ground as will the liberated *Christian* who keeps the precepts of the law by faith. Both will be saved when judgments are revealed although both might well physically perish before Babylon falls.

During the first 1260 days of the Tribulation, observant natural Israelites will be grafted onto the root of righteousness through professing the Jesus is Lord. They have not been forgotten by God even though the Church is today the *Israel* of record.

VI.

Endtime Israel is, according to Paul, the nation in covenant with God under the law of faith (Rom 3:27) that is the righteousness that comes from faith (Rom 10:6), with his law of faith being the Moab covenant first mediated by Moses, and now mediated by Christ Jesus. The return of Israel from the North Country is, now, the recovery of Israel from death through the giving of everlasting life.

The Moab covenant requires Israel to keep what is written in the Book of Deuteronomy (Deut 30:10). Everything written in Deuteronomy includes the commandments of God, especially the Sabbath commandment which is a celebration of Israel's liberation (Deut 5:15). The greater Christian Church rejects keeping the Sabbath commandment, and instead chooses to observe Sunday as *the day of the Lord* instead. Citing the day of the Jesus' resurrection as justification for observing Sunday as its weekly day of rest, the visible Christian Church fails to realize that Jesus' crucifixion occurred mid-calendar week (i.e., on Wednesday) and His resurrection occurred mid-ceremonial week (the mid day of the week of Unleavened Bread), initiating movement from the physical calendar to the spiritual calendar. This movement is seen when comparing Exodus 20:11 with Deuteronomy 5:15, with the reason for keeping the weekly Sabbath going from a memorial to the physical creation to a remembrance of Israel's liberation from bondage.

Jesus' resurrection in the dark portion of Sunday and ascension into heaven at the hour of the Wave Sheaf Offering is already addressed in Scripture: Leviticus 23:9–14.

Sadducees and Pharisees differed on what Moses meant by the "day/morrow after the Sabbath." Sadducees took the referenced "Sabbath" to mean the weekly Sabbath; hence, Jesus as the reality of the First of the firstfruits would have appeared before God on the first day of the week—and He did (John 20:1, 17).

Pharisees held that the "Sabbath" referred to the first high Sabbath [the 15th of Abib] of Unleavened Bread. Thus, Pharisees celebrated the Wave Sheaf Offering and the Feast of Weeks on a fixed calendar date, whereas the Sadducees celebrated both on the first day of the week.

It is here sufficient to note that the celebration of Jesus' resurrection is foreshadowed and commanded in the annual celebration of the high Sabbaths of God. Therefore, the annual celebration of the Resurrection is not a reason for abridging the Sabbath commandment. Only when an Israelite ceases to celebrate the high Sabbaths will the Israelite mistakenly attempt to transfer the authority of the weekly Sabbath to the annual observance of the Wave Sheaf Offering.

The Wave Sheaf Offering

I.

The foremost reason given by the visible Church for Sunday worship is that Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week. What is missed is that this day was also the fourth day of Unleavened Bread: the man Jesus was crucified and died physically on the fourth day of the calendar week, Wednesday, the 14th of Abib, of the year 31 CE (the year starting with the first new moon after the equinox, not the first full moon). But Jesus was resurrected on the fourth day of Passover week.

The seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Sabbath observance under the Moab covenant are memorials to liberation from bondage (*cf.* Deut 16:1; 5:15), not the physical creation. Plus, the fourth high Sabbath of the seven annual high Sabbaths is the Feast of Trumpets, the first day of the seventh month, the high Sabbath that's customarily taught as representing the coming of the Messiah in the physical application of the high Sabbaths. In addition, the fourth day of the spiritual week represented by the Genesis chapter one creation account [the so-called "P" account] features creation of the greater light to rule the day—this creation of the greater light is or represents the resurrection to glory of the saints, the firstfruits of God. So the spiritual significance of the mid-week day begins with liberation from bondage and moves to the coming of the Messiah and to the resurrection of the saints. But all of this is missed when the person does not realize that Jesus was resurrected as the Wave Sheaf Offering, the First of the firstfruits to be accepted by God.

II.

In their physical representation, the high Sabbaths commemorate events separated by time, but the heavenly realm is timeless and the events themselves are stacked upon themselves. The reality of the Days of Unleavened Bread began on the day of the Wave Sheaf Offering, when, because of grace, disciples have no sin imputed to them under the terms of the Passover covenant and under the terms of *Yom Kipporim*, which has Jesus seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for disciples. And it will be during these Days of Unleavened Bread when the reality of Pentecost occurs as well as the resurrection, the reality of the first high Sabbath of *Sukkot*. So those Sabbatarian disciples who do not keep the high Sabbaths err spiritually, and will pay for their error with their physical lives during the first 1260 days of the Tribulation.

About the day when Jesus was crucified, John wrote,

Οἱ οὖν Ἰουδαῖοι (the therefore Jews), ἐπεὶ παρασκευὴ ἦν (since preparation it was) ἵνα μὴ μείνη ἐπὶ (that may not remain upon) τοῦ σταυροῦ (the stake) τὰ σώματα (the bodies) ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ (on the Sabbath), ἣν γὰρ (was for) μεγάλη ἡ ἡμέρα (great the day) ἐκείνου τοῦ σαββάτου (of that the Sabbath) ... (John 19:31)

Jesus was crucified on the Preparation Day (the 14th of Abib) for the great Sabbath day of the Sabbath, making all of Unleavened Bread "the Sabbath" referenced in the phrase, "ἐκείνου τοῦ σαββάτου." Considering now that the two goats selected on the 10th day of the seventh month (*Yom Kipporim*) represent Israel's sin offering, Jesus entering

Jerusalem on the 10th day of the first month as the selected Passover Lamb of God represents both of these goats, with His death at Calvary representing the sacrifice of the first goat on the altar (its blood making atonement for the altar, the temple, and the people), and Jesus following His resurrection representing the Azazel goat, over which the sins of Israel have been read. As high priest, Jesus bears but does not pay the death penalty for the sins of Israel in the inter-dimensional heavenly realm as the reality of the Azazel goat, which in a far land bears but doesn't pay the death penalty for Israel's sins. And what's seen is that the seven month is the visible physical representation of the first month; hence, the civil year begins the 1st day of the seventh month whereas the sacred year begins the 1st day of the first month. The fall Feast season becomes the visible, physical representation of the spiritual harvest of firstfruits, with Christ Jesus being the First of the firstfruits. Thus, the "the Sabbath" referenced in the phrase, "ἐκείνου τοῦ σαββάτου," actually backs up to the 1st day of the first month and represents the entirety of the period during which an Israelite would have journeyed to Jerusalem to keep the Passover, with this period representing half of the gospel of Matthew (chap 16 on), half of Luke's gospel (chap 14 on), and half of John's (chap 12 on).

Add to the above the realization that the Feast of Weeks represents that harvest of firstfruits that is also represented by the last high Sabbath of Unleavened Bread, with the counted seven weeks now representing the seven days of Unleavened Bread (the period when Israel lives without sin by either being under grace or empowered through being filled with the Holy Spirit), and represented by the first high Sabbath of *Sukkot*, and what's seen is the four days between *Yom Kipporim* and *Sukkot* represents the entirety of the Church era when those Israelites who had journeyed to Jerusalem to keep *Sukkot* would have been gathering the boughs of goodly trees and preparing booths ... the physical gathering of boughs is the visible shadow of disciples bringing forth the fruit of the spirit (Gal 5:22–23) as Jesus commanded the fig tree to produce fruit before it was the season for fruit. The temporary booths in which ancient Israelites dwelt during *Sukkot* represents the fleshly bodies of empowered Israel during Christ Jesus' millennial reign as King of kings and Lord of lords; therefore, the fleshly tents or tabernacles in which sons of God, born of spirit, today dwell are as tree boughs not yet gathered and brought to Jerusalem.

Feast of Weeks is also Pentecost: the filling of the room with the sound of a mighty rushing wind [πνεῦμα] on that day of Pentecost following Calvary was the audible (visible but not seen), physical shadow and type of the invisible spiritual baptism of the world into life by spirit (Joel 2:28) that will occur halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation. The cloven tongues of fire that were manifested or seen around the head of each disciple (the first disciples were already born of spirit, but sin still dwelt in their fleshly bodies) was the shadow and type of the world being baptized by fire with the coming of the new heavens and new earth (Rev 21:1). John the Baptist promised that Jesus would baptize the world with spirit and fire. The shadow and type of these two baptisms occurred on Pentecost, thereby placing the reality of both of these baptisms inside the Feast of weeks, and by extension, inside the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Therefore, when the Apostle John identifies the entirety of the spring holy day season as "Sabbath," with the 15th of Abib as "the great Sabbath" of the Sabbath, what's seen is the plan of God being represented by Unleavened Bread, with the harvest of firstfruits forming the mirror image shadow and copy of the harvest of God during the Millennium and in the great White Throne Judgment. *Sukkot*, now, represents Christ's

millennial reign, and the last Great Day of the Feast represents the great White Throne Judgment. The shadow and copy of the reality of *Sukkot* and the last Great Day is Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread—so while Fall Feast serves as a physical shadow of the harvest of firstfruits (i.e., the Passover season), the harvest of firstfruits forms the shadow and copy of the Millennium and the great White Throne Judgment.

The annual Sabbaths of God are not separated events, but are interrelated in a play of shadows and shadowing that makes each essential to the unified whole: the plan of God is for the spiritual harvest of the earth which will have human beings represented by barley, wheat, or tares (false wheat). Those human beings who have been born of spirit in this so-called Church era, and those human beings who will be born of spirit when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh halfway through the seven endtime years, and those ancient Israelites who received the promise of inheriting eternal life—all will be resurrected to glory or to condemnation when Christ Jesus returns as the long-awaited Messiah. All are firstfruits. So going into Jesus' millennial reign, human beings will be very few indeed (Isa chap 24). Yet because the main crop wheat harvest has to ripen to maturity as a fig tree naturally puts on fruit when it is time for fruit, the scarcity of human beings will become a surplus of human beings during the Millennium, each with the mind of Christ. Over the course of the 1,000 years, with the fullness of the earth seen through observance of *Sukkot*, humankind will not die physically from internal causes; the great life-spans of the pre-Flood period will return. But *Sukkot* lacks a high Sabbath on its 7th day because of humankind's rebellion against Christ that will occur when Satan is loosed from the bottomless pit for another three and a half years (Rev 20:7–10). The high Sabbaths reveal this rebellion, and even identifies why this rebellion occurs, but as the 1,000 years pass, Israel will cease thinking spiritually and begin to think physically, focusing upon goodly tree boughs, not on bearing spiritual fruit, the by-then mundane expectation for the nation.

Philadelphians can stand on this side of an abyss and caution those who, in the Millennium, have forgotten about how deceitful the Adversary is, but no warning will be heeded. As King Solomon would have refused to put away his many foreign wives, Israelites in the Millennium will not heed a warning from this side of the abyss: *Philadelphians* can warn about the failings of democracy, but the very people who hear these warnings will envy what could be accomplished by a few under Satan's reign as prince of this world, and they will use the warnings as reasons for joining with the Adversary in rebellion against God, with their rebellion seeming no more like rebellion than did Israel's rebellion in the days of Samuel. But let those who rebel stumble over the living stones that will then be part of New Jerusalem as the visible Christian Church today stumbles over the cornerstone of the temple. Thus, for those who know to use the term, this is a self-aware text.

The Sabbatarian teacher who would hinder disciples from keeping the high Sabbaths of God is either an active minister of the Adversary (2 Cor 11:15), or teaches from ignorance. That "woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess" (Rev 2:20) teaches endtime disciples to commit spiritual fornication through ignoring the high Sabbaths of God—and Sabbatarian disciples who commit adultery with her by worshiping her instead of the Father and the Son will suffer great tribulation. They will not suffer easy martyrdom, for they advertise their adultery around the world.

III.

The Wave Sheaf Offering should properly be a fixed day of the week observance in this era: the Lord [YHWH] spoke to Moses, saying,

Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, “When you come into the land that I give you and reap its harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest, and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, so that you may be accepted. On the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. ... And you shall eat neither bread nor grain parched or fresh until this same day, until you have brought the offering of your God: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.” (Lev 23:9–11, 14)

If all of the spring holy day season is Sabbath, as the Apostle John wrote, some ambiguity exists about the phrase, *On the day after the Sabbath* — what Sabbath is being referenced?

In Scripture, two models exist, the first under Joshua when Israel physically entered into the Promised Land, with this land of Judea forming the shadow and type of Sabbath observance and entering into God’s rest (*cf.* Heb 3:16–4:11; Ps 95:10–11; Num chap 14). In this model, Israel crossed the Jordan on the 10th day of the first month (Josh 4:19), was circumcised after entering into God’s rest (Josh 5:2–7), then while still camped at Gilgal, the nation kept the Passover on the 14th day of the month in the evening (v. 10). On the day after the Passover, “on that very day” (v. 11), Israel ate the produce of the land ... if the day after Israel ate the Passover, the first of the grain of Canaan was waved and the people ate of the produce later that day, then the Passover would have had to be a Sabbath.

The sect of the Pharisees and modern rabbinical Judaism believes the Sabbath referenced in Joshua 5:11 is the high Sabbath, the 15th of Abib, of Unleavened Bread, not a weekly Sabbath; thus, they offer the Wave Sheaf on the 16th of Abib, a fixed calendar date.

But a problem exists: Israel in Egypt ate the Passover sacrifice on the 14th day, not in the 15th day of Abib.

In Deuteronomy, Moses instructs Israel,

You may not offer the Passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the Lord your God is giving you, but at the place that the Lord your God will choose, to make his name dwell in it, there you shall offer the Passover sacrifice, *in the evening at sunset, at the time you came out of Egypt*. And you shall cook it and eat it at the place that the Lord your God will choose. And in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents. For six days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the Lord your God. (Deut 16:5–8 emphasis added)

Yet, in Egypt, Israel was instructed,

Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. *None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning*. For the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you.

You shall observe this rite as a statute for you and for your sons forever.
And when you come to the land that the Lord will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service. (Ex 12:21–25 emphasis added)

If Israel did not leave their houses in Egypt the night on which the nation ate the Passover sacrifice, then there is the same type of discrepancy between the Passover sacrifice as recorded in Exodus and the Passover sacrifice as recorded in Deuteronomy as there is a discrepancy in the reason for why the Sabbath was commanded to be kept in Exodus (20:11) and for why the Sabbath was to be kept in Deuteronomy (5:15) ... in Egypt, Israel killed the Passover sacrifice at even going into the 14th day of the first month, and ate the Passover during the dark portion of the 14th day. Israel in Egypt, with the exception of Moses and Aaron, did not leave their houses until morning.

Jesus, in His final Passover, ate the sacrifice on the dark portion of the 14th day; He was then betrayed and taken during the dark portion of the 14th day, then crucified during the light portion of the 14th day. He died about 3:00 pm in the afternoon, when Pharisees were then killing Israel's Passover lamb ... Jesus ate the Passover after the pattern established by the first Passover covenant made in Egypt, but He was offered up as the Passover Lamb of God according to the Moab Passover instructions, or Moab Passover covenant.

- In Egypt, Israel killed the Passover lamb going into the 14th day of the first month, ate the lamb during the dark portion of the 14th, then looted the Egyptians during the light portion of the 14th before leaving Egypt at the end of the 14th, as the 15th began.
- The killing of the Passover sacrifice going into the 14th is the model that established the Passover covenant which remains in effect to this day; hence, disciples are to eat the Passover sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed, the dark portion of the 14th (1 Cor 11:23–26)
- Under the Moab covenant, however, the Passover will be killed at the end of the 14th, going into the 15th. The observance of the Passover under the Moab covenant in this so-called Church era is not to eat the sacraments again, but to celebrate the night when Israel came out from Egypt; i.e., from sin.
- The Passover should be observed on two nights, with radically different observances on these two nights, for Jesus was not crucified twice.
 1. Christians are to take the sacraments of bread and wine on the dark portion of the 14th as a memorial of Israel's physical liberation; this is a somber occasion.
 2. Christians are to feast on the dark portion of the 15th as a memorial to Israel's spiritual liberation; this is a joyous occasion.
 3. The first celebration of Passover is the mirror, or chiral image of the second celebration.
- Judaism recognizes that the Passover is to be celebrated on two nights, but Judaism celebrates a day late and for the wrong reasons; therefore, Judaism's celebrations have no standing in *Philadelphia*.

The discrepancy between when the Passover sacrifice was killed and eaten in Egypt, and when Pharisees were killing and eating the Passover sacrifice in the 1st-Century (with the Pharisee's 1st-Century practiced based on what was recorded in Deuteronomy) enabled Jesus to both eat the Passover and to be the Passover Lamb of God, sacrificed under the Moab covenant. Therefore, Jesus' sacrifice did not end the Passover covenant

made on the day when God took the fathers of Judah and Israel “by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt” (Heb 8:9).

- The sacraments of bread and wine represent the body and blood of Jesus on only one day of the year, the dark portion of the 14th of Abib. On every other day of the year, they are an offering of the ground, Cain’s offering.
- The Moab covenant is a spiritual or eternal covenant that did not begin on the plains of Moab, but at Calvary, when Jesus came from a far land to love God, to obey His voice, and to keep all that is written in the Book of Deuteronomy. (Deut chap 30)
- The spiritual night that began at Calvary has not yet arrived at its midnight hour, the hour when death angels shall again pass throughout the land to slay firstborns not covered by the blood of the Passover Lamb of God.
- So the model for how Israel under Joshua kept the Passover in Canaan is the model for how Israel under Jesus will keep the Passover in the Millennium.
- The model for how the Church is to keep the Passover is the model for how Israel kept the Passover in Egypt. The Lamb of God (the sacraments of bread and wine) are to be eaten on the dark portion of the 14th of Abib.

All of the above pertains to when the Wave Sheaf Offering is to be observed; for using the Moab model as the controlling passages pertaining to killing and eating the Passover sacrifice, Pharisees and rabbinical Judaism observed the Wave Sheaf on the 16th of Abib whereas the Sadducees and the Churches of God contend that the referenced Sabbath is the weekly Sabbath occurring within the Feast of Unleavened Bread; thus they celebrate the Wave Sheaf Offering on a fixed day of the week, the first day. And with the Wave Sheaf being a shadow of Christ, the substance of the feasts, new moons, and Sabbaths (Col 2:16–17), the testimony of Jesus is that referenced Sabbath is the weekly Sabbath at least until the New Covenant replaces the old Passover covenant made on the day when God took the fathers of Israel by the hand to lead the nation out of Egypt.

Scripture is silent about what day of the week Joshua lead Israel into Canaan. What is known is that Israel under Joshua kept the Passover, with Israel eating the Passover on a Sabbath day. If Israel would have eaten this Passover on dark portion of the 14th, then the following day (the 15th) would have been the great Sabbath day of the Sabbath and would not have been a day on which grain would have been waved if the Wave Sheaf Offering is to occur on the morrow after the Sabbath. Therefore, by necessity, Israel under Joshua ate the Passover on the dark portion of the 15th day of Abib, which could well have also been the weekly Sabbath. If the high Sabbath were also the weekly Sabbath, then the morrow after the Sabbath would have been on a Sunday that was also the 16th of Abib.

There are scriptural reasons for the high Sabbath to also be the weekly Sabbath when Israel under Joshua ate that first Passover in Canaan: in Greek, both the name Joshua and the name Jesus are written, Ἰησοῦς, the only name by which men can be saved (Acts 4:10–12). This only name is not a Hebrew utterance or a Greek utterance, but the name of the one who leads Israel into God’s rest, a name that no person today knows (Rev 19:12) so that no one can go ahead on his or her own but all must follow the lead of the Lamb of God. Joshua/Jesus/Ἰησοῦς will lead Israel into God’s rest, a euphemistic expression for God’s presence, when He returns on the 10th day of the first month.

- The above is an important concept to remember: Christ Jesus returns on the 10th day of the first month, not in the fall of the year.
- It is the Antichrist who comes claiming to be the Messiah in the fall of the year, 42 months or 1260 days before Christ Jesus returns.
- Christ Jesus returns 2520 days after the second Passover liberation of Israel from indwelling sin and death, with day 1260 being a doubled day patterned after Joshua's doubled day.
- Jesus will, according to the Moab covenant, eat the Passover with new wine in His Father's kingdom (Matt 26:29), the reason for the Moab Passover to now be celebrated as the Day to be Much Observed.
- The Day to be Much Observed is always celebrated on the dark portion of the 15th of Abib, and celebrated with feasting, not with bitter herbs or with the sacraments of blood and wine.

Because disciples will eat the Moab Passover in the Father's kingdom when Jesus next drinks of the fruit of the vine, and because the present Passover covenant will end when the lives of firstborns are again given as the ransom for Israel (Isa 43:4), the Moab Passover timeline should not today be used for determining when the Wave Sheaf Offering is to be celebrated ... the Wave Sheaf Offering should always be celebrated on Sunday, the day after the weekly Sabbath during Unleavened Bread. As the Passover sacraments of bread and wine should be taken on the night that Jesus was betrayed (1 Cor 11:23–26) and on no other night [again, on every other night bread and wine are Cain's offering, not righteous Abel's], the Wave Sheaf Offering should be made on the Sunday following the weekly Sabbath within the seven days of Unleavened Bread, even if that weekly Sabbath is the last high Sabbath of Unleavened Bread. It is not a requirement that the Wave Sheaf Offering be made within the seven days of Unleavened Bread, but that it is made on the morrow after the Sabbath. And it is made about 9:00 am Sunday.

If keeping the Wave Sheaf Offering throughout Israel's generations is a statute forever, then celebrating Jesus' resurrection on the day following the weekly Sabbath during the seven days of Unleavened Bread is a commanded celebration—and "Resurrection Sunday" is a poor cousin to the offering of the Wave Sheaf; for *Resurrection Sunday* misses the significance of Israel's liberation from bondage to sin (as represented by the second Passover) and to death (as represented by the resurrection). It barely addresses that Jesus will return as the Messiah.

- The seven day calendar week and Sabbath observance under the Sinai covenant pointed to the physical creation (Ex 20:11).
- The seven day calendar week and Sabbath observance under the Moab covenant points to Israel's liberation from sin and death, the reality foreshadowed by Israel's liberation from Pharaoh (Deut 5:15).
- Likewise, the Passover covenant made in Egypt extends from when blood was shed in Egypt at a first Passover to when blood will be shed worldwide at a second Passover, for the copy of a heavenly covenant is purified with blood (Heb 9:22–23).
- The Moab Passover covenant, however, is not a copy of a heavenly thing but is the heavenly reality, and as such, it is ratified by a better sacrifice as the

covenant made with Noah about never again bringing a flood of water over the face of the earth is ratified by the bow set in the sky.

1. The Moab covenant is ratified by a better sacrifice, the second song of Moses (Deut chap 32).
2. The Moab Passover covenant is ratified by feasting in celebration of anticipated or achieved liberation from sin and death.

The Pharisees were without spiritual understanding as rabbinical Judaism is today without spiritual understanding. Their lack of understanding, though, was necessary for the completion of the plan of God. Likewise, the lack of spiritual understanding among Sabbatarian disciples is necessary for completion of the plan of God ... the livestock do not need to know what the Shepherd does. However, those whom the Shepherd counts as friends know what is occurring, and by faith, keep the high Sabbaths of God with understanding.

The Father's Confirmation of the Sabbath

I.

Perhaps one of the most difficult concepts to understand is that the man Jesus, having entered His creation as His son, His only, did not speak His words during His earthly ministry, but spoke only the words of His spiritual Father, the unknown God of Israel.

Jesus' first Father, *Theos*, was the *Logos*, the spokesman for the Most High, with this relationship represented by two metaphors, the first that *YHWH Elohim* made humankind in the image of *YHWH Elohim*; "male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27), so to be created in the image of *YHWH Elohim*, humankind is male and female, with the "female" aspect of God contained in the *Logos* who came as the man Jesus.

Biological gender makes comprehending what the above metaphor describes difficult, for the male nouns and pronouns used to name and describe *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος] do not well encompass the female "helpmate" image. In this case, biological gender, itself, forms the concealing metaphor.

As the Apostle Paul used the altar to the Unknown God to spread the gospel of Christ to Greeks, endtime disciples will reveal the "unknown God," who is the Father, to those who claim to be Gentile Christians. John wrote, "And this is eternal life, that they know you [the Father] the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:3). Therefore, knowing the Father is central to salvation. Without knowing the Father, the person is not saved regardless of what the person says about having a personal relationship with Jesus—simply put, the person who claims to know Jesus yet doesn't know the Father knows neither Jesus nor the Father and is not saved.

The other metaphoric relationship is disclosed by Moses being as God to Aaron (Ex 4:16): Moses and Aaron are two brothers according to the flesh, with Aaron delivering the words of Moses to Israel, the two functioning as one entity in a manner analogous to how a man and his wife become one flesh through unity even though they are two.

Before proceeding one important scriptural passage needs referenced:

Now that day was the Sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed." But he answered them, "The man who healed me, that man said to me, 'Take up your bed, and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk?'" Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you." The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."

This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God. (John 5:9–18)

“God” [θεός] is not the name of an individual, but the name of a “house” [οικία], the house of the Father [τῆ οἰκία τοῦ πατρός — John 14:2]. And in this house presently dwells both the Father and the Son, whereas before *the Logos* entered His creation as His only Son, *YHWH* had dwelt in this house as a man and his wife dwells in a physical house. *The Logos* was the Helpmate of the Unknown God, as a wife is to be the helpmate of her husband. So *the Logos* as *Yah* and the Unknown God were together, not separately, the Tetragrammaton *YHWH*. To identify *Yah* as *YHWH* is to deny the Father and thus deny one’s salvation.

After the resurrection of firstfruits, glorified sons of God as many younger brothers (and as the Bride of Christ) of Christ Jesus (Rom 8:29) will also dwell in this *house*. The many sons of God are without biological gender, an attribute of the flesh that only pertains to the flesh. Gender serves as metaphors for spiritual relationships. And the lesson of Hanukkah disciples are to learn lies in the boldness with which Jesus identified Himself as the Son of God (John 10:36). If disciples are also doing the work of God, they should not be ashamed of calling themselves sons of God, and if sons, then God. To do otherwise is to deny Christ. But within this *house of God* are relationships that exist through biological gender among human beings.

Jesus spoke only the Father’s words as Aaron spoke only Moses’ words to Israel [with the notable exception of the golden calf incident]. Jesus did not speak His own words; thus, the utterances of the Father that Jesus delivered through the renewing work of the Holy Spirit were not limited to the movement of air in sound waves. The work being then done by the Father is the work that Jesus was visibly doing, perhaps the best assignment of meaning to John 5:17.

- Delivering the utterances of the Father was the work that Jesus did during His ministry.
- Delivering the words of Jesus is the work that disciples presently do—and by extension, delivering the words of Jesus is delivering the oral or physical portion of the words of the Father.
- Once disciples are liberated from indwelling sin and death at the second Passover, delivering the words of Jesus will be a work of faith.
- Following the second Passover liberation of Israel, disciples will no longer be the Body of Christ and hence one with Christ Jesus; rather, disciples will be the Helpmate of Christ Jesus if they actually deliver the words of Jesus.

All things came into being through the *Logos*; so the miracles Jesus performed should be perceived as the speech-acts of the Father, who dwells in timelessness.

II.

Heaven is represented by the Millennium rest, by the weekly Sabbath rest, and by ancient Judea (*cf.* Ps 95:10–11; Heb 3:16–4:11). Therefore, the Father’s delivery of His speech-acts on a particular day within the created universe causes special significance to be assigned to that day; for the Father could have delivered His speech-acts on any day of the week or month or year. Remember, the Father does all of His work within the same unchanging moment; so He has to make a concerted effort to have His speech-acts delivered on a particular day if they are not to be delivered on any changing moment within time. In plainer speech, if the Father did not choose to figuratively deliver a sermon on the Sabbath through His speech-act of healing the invalid, He would have

caused the invalid to be healed on another day, or most likely, healed without any attention being attracted by the healing.

By Jesus delivering the speech-acts of the Father on the Sabbath (seven times in the Gospels), the Father does more than connect the Sabbath to the redemptive work of God. The Father places His stamp of approval on the Sabbath, thus transferring the holiness of *YHWH Elohim* resting on the seventh day to the renewing work He does through the man Jesus, this work the on-going activity of giving life to that which is dead.

Acts 20:7

I.

Paul, in correcting the saints at Corinth concerning the taking of the *Lord's Supper*, or better, *the Passover*, said, "For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it" (1 Cor 11:23–24). The night Jesus was betrayed was the 14th of Abib. The "days of Unleavened Bread" (Acts 20:6) which Paul kept at Philippi would have begun with the high Sabbath on the 15th day of Abib. Thus, Paul would have kept the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread at Philippi. He would have then set sail for Troas, where they arrived in five days. Paul would not have again taken the Passover three weeks after taking the Passover at Philippi, with the saints there; for the Passover sacraments are to be taken once a year.

Breaking bread is a euphemistic expression for eating a meal: when going to an 18th - Century French and Indian War reenactment in 21st-Century America, the French reenactors judiciously look for would be English spies by whether they "break" bread (literally), or whether they slice a piece of bread from a loaf. The custom of slicing bread had not yet caught on in France in the 18th-Century, whereas the English had already taken up the custom.

Paul and Luke sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread. It is not likely that Luke would have used the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a time marker when in Asia and Achaia [Greece] if the Feast wasn't being observed by the saints thirty years after Calvary. Luke is not writing to a Jewish audience, but to "Theophilus" (Acts 1:1) — the name reads, *Friend of God*, and suggests that *Theophilus* might be representative of every Christian to whom Paul went as the apostle sent to the Gentiles. Luke is not writing to Hebrew Christians. So for Luke to use Unleavened Bread as a time marker that affected the saints is significant.

Luke and Paul came to Troas where they stayed seven days; they had sailed for five days. The eighth day, the day Paul talked until midnight and the day Paul intended to depart (remember, the day starts at sunset, not midnight), is the first day of the week. Paul's voice would not have held out if he had started talking Sunday morning and continued until midnight. Paul started talking to them when they were gathered together for dinner, and he talked until midnight.

Eutychus fell asleep and fell out the window sometime around midnight. He was taken up for dead, but Paul took him in his arms, and the young man lived. Then Paul proceeded to talk until dawn (Acts 20:11).

If Paul had begun talking Sunday morning and had continued until dawn Monday morning, the story would be difficult to believe; for after talking all night, Paul walked approximately nineteen miles, the distance from Troas to Assos (Acts 20:13–14). So if the account is accurate, and if Sunday were treated as the Sabbath, what the reader finds is that beginning Sunday on the dark or night portion of the day, Paul talked for most of 12 hours, then walked from Troas to Assos while Luke and the others sailed to Assos, where they took him aboard (the following day they went to Mitylene). If the account is accurate, it was really on one day that Paul talked all night and walked all day, not exactly how a disciple would rest on the Sabbath or would enter into God's rest. But this

feat of endurance is possible if the person had rested on the Sabbath, and was refreshed and ready to go when the Sabbath was over and the first day of the week began.

Paul tells the saints at Philippi to imitate him (3:17); he tells saints at Corinth to imitate him as he imitates Christ Jesus (1 Cor 11:1) — so if saints were to imitate Paul, they would speak and travel on the first day of the week.

It is not believable that Paul considered the first day of the week as the Sabbath, especially since he said in his defense to Festus that he had committed no offense against the law of the Jews or against the temple (Acts 25:8). Paul had rested on the Sabbath so that he could travel the following day.

Nowhere in this account is there any command to cease observing the Sabbath and to begin observing Sunday.

1 Corinthians 16:1–2

I.

Paul wrote, “Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.”

The reason for taking up a collection for the saints at Jerusalem was the famine occurring in Judea. This famine was not affecting the saints in Asia or in Achaia; so it wasn't a shortage of money that was preventing the saints in Judea from having enough. It was a shortage of grain, of foodstuffs. Therefore the collection that was to be taken up wasn't of money, for money could buy no food when no food was to be had. The collection was of food stores, basic grain and other goods, all of which required work to assemble. The collection wasn't passing an offering plate, but the bringing of sacks of grain and amphorae of oil and wine to a central collection point. This collection was real work, and work to be done at the beginning of the week when whatever was left from the previous week could be offered to the saints at Jerusalem.

Many who argue for Sunday observance point to the Seventh Day Adventists' practice of taking up a collection every Sabbath, but this practice is contrary to Scripture as is the doubly false practice of passing an offering plate on Sunday mornings. The practice of the Sabbatarian Churches of God has been more in line with Scripture: these fellowships apply literally the admonishment, “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God [*YHWH* your *Elohim*] at the place he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God that he had given you” (Deut 16:16–17).

Therefore, an offering is traditionally taken only on the seven high Sabbaths: the first and last day of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, first day of Tabernacles, and Last Great Day, with some fellowships only taking up an offering three times a year: First Day of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and First Day of Tabernacles.

Spiritually, the command for all males to appear three seasons a year would have the inner new man presenting the tent of flesh in which he dwells as his offering to God on these three seasons. But the important point here is that it is unscriptural to take up an offering on weekly Sabbath services; it is unscriptural to mix the mundane with the spiritual. Paul's command was for the offering to be taken up on the first day of the week, not at Sabbath services. Plus, Paul was addressing a special situation, and was not commanding that Jerusalem fellowships take up a collection on the first day of the week. He limited his instructions to Galatia, Corinth, and those regions that were not in a famine situation.

Again, in Paul's command to take up a collection on the first day of the week, there is nothing about ceasing to observe the Sabbath.

Romans 10:4

I.

The Apostle Paul's desire was that his people, Israel, might be saved, for they had zeal for God, but not according to knowledge (Rom 10:1–2). However, Paul cites Isaiah: “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved, for the Lord will carry out his sentence upon the earth fully and without delay” (Rom 9:27–28 — from Isa 10:22–23) ... the prophet Isaiah continues, adding that Israel is not to fear the Assyrians who have taken them captive, for in a little while God will “wield against them a whip, as he struck Midian at the rock of Oreb” (Isa 10:26). But the house of Israel never returned from Assyria. And though Sennacherib fled from Jerusalem as the Midianites had before Gideon, the Apostle Paul assigns an endtime application to Israel's prophecy by equating *returning to the Promised Land* with salvation. Plus, God has not carried out His foresworn wrath against Israel (Ezek 20:8, 33). So either God has delayed in fully carrying out His wrath upon the earth, or Isaiah's prophecies had a physical application and have a spiritual application in which Assyria is a euphemism for death as Egypt is a representation of sin.

Paraphrased, Paul writes that although Israel will be many, only a remnant will be saved, for God will carry out His sentence of death upon the earth (Rom 9:28–29). Then Paul asks, “What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith” (Rom 9:30). So salvation comes by righteousness—“a righteousness that is by faith.” Israel pursued a law that would have led to righteousness, and here is where understanding is required:

A lawyer sought to test Jesus and asked what he must do to inherit eternal life (Luke 10:25). When Jesus asked the lawyer how he read the Law, the lawyer said that a person was to love God fully and love neighbor as self. The lawyer quotes from Deuteronomy. And Jesus told the lawyer that he had answered correctly, that he was to go out and do what he had said. So Jesus' testimony is that righteousness can come by the Law, which is what Paul affirms.

But for righteousness to come by the Law, the nation would need to turn to God and begin to love God with heart and mind, keeping His commandments and His statutes when the nation was in a far land (Deut 30:1–2). God would then bring Israel back to the Promised Land which the Psalmist calls God's rest (Ps 95:10–11), where God would give Israel circumcised hearts (Deut 30:6). Turning to God in a far land requires faith. And it is this turning to God when Israel is in a land of foreign gods that equates to a person of *the nations* turning to God by faith.

Paul tells the saints at Philippi and at Corinth to imitate him, and in his defense to Festus, he said that he had committed no offense against the law of the Jews or against the temple. John tells disciples to walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6), that whoever practices sinning is of the devil (3:8), that by who sins and who doesn't the children of the devil and the children of God are made evident (v. 10). If a disciple is, then, to be a son of God as opposed to a child of the devil, the disciple will keep the commandments as Jesus kept the commandments.

On the plains of Moab, a second covenant is made with Israel and mediated by Moses (Deut 29:1). This second covenant requires Israel to choose life or death (Deut 30:15–20) — and choosing life is to love God and neighbor, keeping His commandments and statutes, and doing all that is written in the book of Deuteronomy (Deut 30:10). This second covenant is ratified by a song (Deut chap 32), so this covenant is not an earthly thing that is a copy of a heavenly thing as was the covenant ratified by blood at Sinai (Heb 9:22–23). This covenant is a heavenly thing, and this is the covenant to which better promises were added [better promises are not added to a covenant that has been abolished] when its mediator became the glorified Christ Jesus.

Paul’s desire and prayer is that Israel may be saved. He bears witness that Israel has a zeal for God, but the nation is ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God ... as Abraham’s faith was counted unto him as righteousness (Rom 4:22), the faith of disciples who believe in the One who raised Jesus from the dead will be counted to them as righteousness (v. 24). The man Jesus is the righteousness that has come from God (John 1:1–14); thus, the disciple who hears the words of Jesus and believes the One who sent Him (John 5:24) acknowledges that Jesus is the righteousness that comes from God. Therefore, Christ is—by way of a disciple’s belief that comes by faith—the end of the Law by being the righteousness that has come from God.

The above, however, is not the end of the matter, for Paul continues, “But the righteousness based on faith says—” and Paul cites Deuteronomy 30:11–14.

The Israelite who, when in a far land, turns to God by faith and returns to loving God and keeping His commandments chooses life. Since Calvary, however, to turn to God by faith requires the profession with the mouth that Jesus is Lord and belief in the heart that God raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 10:9). And for the Observant Jew to make such a profession requires the Jew to undertake a mental or spiritual journey of a distance equivalent to the physical distance of Abraham’s journey of faith from Ur to the Promised Land.

What was physical becomes spiritual: the geographical territories of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon form the visible shadows of the mental topography of sin, death, and the kingdom of this world (see Rev 11:15) ... as only a remnant of Israel returned from geographical Babylon, only a remnant of spiritually circumcised Israel will leave this world and journey to the plains of Moab where life and death is set before this spiritual nation. Those disciples that choose life will figuratively cross the Jordan and enter into God’s rest (*cf.* Ps 95:10–11; Heb 3:16–4:11). Those who choose death will remain in Moab.

- Moses only leads Israel to the plains of Moab and the choice of life and death, not into the Promised Land.
- Israel follows Joshua/Jesus [Ἰησοῦς] into Promised Land or God’s rest.

Israel goes from being the physically circumcised nation to being the nation whose circumcision is of the heart, by Spirit, and not by hands (Rom 2:28–29; Col 2:11).

Therefore, “There is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved’” (Rom 10:12–13). And the righteousness that comes by faith (v. 6–8) will have every Israelite with a circumcised heart keeping all that is written in Deuteronomy, where Moses writes of Jesus (John 5:46)

If Paul would have written nothing more about the subject after writing, “For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved’” (Rom 10:13), then those who

teach lawlessness would have scriptural support for salvation coming from a mumbled *sinner's prayer*. But Paul adds, "But how are they to call on him in whom they have not believed" (Rom 10:14). The sinners of this world have not believed in Jesus, or in God.

Jesus said that He did not come to accuse Israel, for the nation already has one who accuses the nation, Moses. And Moses accuses Israel of rebellion against God in Deuteronomy (Deut 31:25–27), the book Moses commanded to be placed to the side of the Ark of the Covenant. Whereas the two tablets of stone on which were inscribed by the finger of God the ten living words lay inside the ark—these two tablets are the shadow and copy of the laws of God being written on two tablets of flesh, the heart and the mind of a disciple—the book of Deuteronomy was outside the Ark and placed there as a witness against Israel. It remains the accuser of Israel.

- The Book of Deuteronomy is the accuser of every Israelite, circumcised of heart or circumcised in the flesh;
- The Book of Deuteronomy is the first witness against every Israelite, with the second witness being the Israelite him or herself;
- Thus, Jesus accuses no one of sin. He doesn't have-to.

The person who believes in the Lord and who hears the words of Jesus will be the one who keeps the commandments and teaches others to do likewise (Matt 5:19). This is the person who will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. And this is the person who will be heard when the person calls on the name of the Lord (see Ezek 20:2–3). The lawless will not be heard (Matt 7:21–23).

Lazarus and Dives

I.

If the rich man in the parable (Luke 16:19–31) is in Hades being tormented while his brothers yet live during Jesus' lifetime or earlier, then what recompense will Jesus bring with Him at His return for this rich man? What additional recompense will there be other than fiery torment (Luke 16:23)? Herein lies the fundamental problem with traditional understandings of the Lazarus/Dives parable: in order for this rich man to receive torment after death, he must have life that Paul says is the free gift of God, "eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 6:23), for the wages of sin are death, not everlasting life in a rotisserie not quite hot enough to consume the person.

II.

In the vision of John, the glorified Jesus says, "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done" (Rev 22:12). Paul wrote concerning his ministry and those who were already accusing him of being false: "I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God" (1 Co 4:4–5). So judgments of born-of-spirit individuals are revealed when Christ comes.

If the spiritual king of Tyre that is the Adversary, Satan, the old dragon, has fire come from his belly to utterly consume him, making him no more forever (Ezek 28:18–19), then why won't Dives [Latin for "rich man"] be likewise utterly consumed?

John saw Death and Hades "thrown into the lake of fire" (Rev 20:14), thereby making Hades a euphemistic expression for the grave, for Hades followed Death, the rider of the fourth horse of the Apocalypse to whom power was given to kill a fourth part of humankind (Rev 6:8).

John saw a great White Throne, and judgment of the dead, great and small (Rev 20:11–12). Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each of these dead men and women were then judged, "according to what they had done" (v. 13). They had not previously been judged, an important concept to note. The rich man had not been judged when he was being tormented in the Lazarus/Dives fable. He entered Hades upon death and was tormented before his judgment was revealed.

John wrote, quoting Jesus,

Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. *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 5:19–23 — emphasis added).

For the Lazarus/Dives fable to be a revealing of afterlife fates, the Father must consign un-judged humankind to torment or to the bosom of Abraham, where the Son will find them on one side or on the other side of a great abyss where He will then judge these men and women upon His return as the Messiah. That is nonsense, for the Father judges no one, and consigning one person to torment and one to paradise is certainly judging.

In the passage about all judgment being given to the Son is the statement that *like the Father, the Son will give life to whom He will*. This statement contains the implicit concept that the Father gives life to whom He will, which would make the Father a respecter of persons if He does not give life to everyone. His will must, then, be that everyone is raised from the dead, that everyone is saved.

The writer of Hebrews says, “And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him” (Heb 9:27–28). Thus, when Christ, to whom all judgment has been given, returns as the Messiah, He does not come to deal with sin, but to save those who await His coming.

The world does not await His coming.

When does Christ deal with sin, especially considering that all judgment has been given to him? Jesus told the Pharisees, “Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. 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 5:45–47).

If Jesus accuses no one of sin, letting Moses do that work [which he does in Deuteronomy 31:26–27], and if He does not deal with sin upon His return, then who accuses the portion of humankind of wrongdoing that has never heard of Moses? A problem appears to exist that doesn't really exist at all; for Paul wrote,

For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. 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. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse and even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.” (Rom 2:12–16)

The thoughts of those who sinned without the law will accuse these individuals of sin, thereby causing them to perish. The thoughts of those who have the precepts of the law written on their hearts and in the consciences, but who have never heard of Moses, will accuse *and will excuse* those who are judged by God through Christ Jesus, and who are thereby justified by Jesus being the propitiation of their lawlessness (Rom 3:25). The righteous requirements of the law must be fulfilled (Rom 8:4). The Father judges no one; He has given all judgment to Jesus. So there can be no judgment revealed of anyone until after Jesus returns, not to deal with sin, but to reveal judgments of those whom the Father has raised from the dead.

The Father has only raised from the dead potential firstfruits at this time. And here is where problems enter the traditional teachings of Christendom. Peter wrote, “For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God” (1 Pet 4:17). The household of God are those whom the Father has raised from the dead. Endtime disciples of Christ Jesus do not find that the world is, today, the household of God. The dead remain dead. There has been neither a resurrection of the dead from Hades, nor has the sea given up its dead (Rev 20:13a).

Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life” (John 5:24). So the person who hears Jesus’ words and believes that the Father sent Him (this requires the person to believe that the Son and the Father are two entities forming one house—οἰκία) does not come under judgment.

Why no judgment on those who hear and believe? This would seem to make God a respecter of persons if a portion of humankind is not judged.

Not coming under judgment is because judgment is presently on those who are of the household of God. Baptism into the Body of Christ equates to “real” death; for judgment follows death and does not precede it. Belief equates with keeping the precepts of the law. Belief does not occur where sin exists. To hear the word of Jesus and believe the One who sent Him requires the person to keep the commandments of God by faith, which now causes the provisions of the second covenant mediated by Moses and made with Israel on the plains of Moab (Deut chaps 29–31) to come into play. The terms of this second covenant offers to Israel circumcised hearts (Deut 30:6) upon returning to God when in a far land (vv. 1–2), with returning to God described as loving God with heart and mind [nephesh], and obeying the voice of God to keep His commandments and statutes and all that is written in “this book of the law” —Deuteronomy (v. 10).

III.

Part of the second or Moab covenant is choosing life or death on “this day, today” (Deut 30:15), the day of salvation.

What Paul writes about the Moab covenant, the day of salvation, and the righteousness that comes from faith (Rom 10:6) is poorly understood by Christendom: on the plains of Moab was the assembled nation of Israel, none of which (except for Joshua, and Caleb) had been counted in the census of the second year, the census of Numbers 1:1. This was a new nation of Israel, a nation of the children of Israel and of the mixed multitude that that had escaped from Pharaoh.

The entirety of Israel was assembled before Moses (Deut 29:10–15) to hear the terms of this second covenant that would, when accepted, be ratified by a song (Deut chap 32), a better sacrifice than the blood of bulls and goats that ratified the first Sinai covenant (Ex 24:5–8). The song was a heavenly sacrifice that purified this covenant as a spiritual or everlasting covenant (Heb 9:23) and not as a shadow of a future covenant. This is an important concept to note: this second covenant will get a new mediator in Christ Jesus, but this second covenant, itself, endures with the better promises brought to it by its new mediator. It will never be replaced by another covenant. And the terms of this covenant require that on a particular day, the day when this covenant is made with Israel, that the circumcised or uncircumcised Israelite chooses life or death, with the

choice of “life” being made through loving God with heart and mind, with this love for God revealed by the Israelite obeying His voice to keep His commandments.

The Moab covenant and the Book of Deuteronomy are not a second giving of the Law, but a second law or covenant. Christendom, because of its lawlessness, has never understood that the Law of Moses (i.e., the Torah) is not one covenant made at Sinai that pertained to a rebellious nation not under grace. Before the giving of the law, every person was under “grace” in that no sin was accounted to the person (Rom 5:13). The Buddhist who knew nothing of the commandments was under natural grace even though he or she would perish without the law if this Buddhist did not do those things that the law required: if this Buddhist did what the law required, then he or she showed that the work that the law was to do had been written on the Buddhist’s heart and the person’s conscience and conflicting thoughts will both accuse and excuse this Buddhist when God through Christ Jesus judges the secrets of men (Rom 2:12–16). The Buddhist, regardless of how long ago he or she lived, is not in hell being tormented, but is in the dust of the earth, awaiting resurrection in the great White Throne Judgment, which will occur after the 1,000 year reign of Christ Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords.

But every Israelite who has been born of spirit is under the Moab covenant and is under judgment if the person has been baptized. And because this Israelite has life in both this world and in the inter-dimensional portion of the heaven realm, this Israelite needs two coverings for this son of God’s lawlessness, one for sins committed in this world and one for the disciple’s sins in the heavenly realm ... although some Christians will be quick to say that there is no sin in the heavenly realm, that claim is not true of the inter-dimensional realm that is seen in Scripture as the bottomless pit. If a man looks upon a woman with lust but never makes any attempt to have contact with the woman, the man does not sin in this world, but according to Jesus the man has committed adultery with the woman (Matt 5:27–28). Where does he commit adultery with her? Not in this world, not in the flesh. Rather, he commits adultery with her in the realm of intangible thought which lies in this inter-dimensional heavenly realm where knowledge equates to physical geography and thought with the vegetative growth of gardens and fields.

On the day when an Israelite enters into the second covenant, this Israelite passes from death to life and does not come under judgment; yet the flesh is sure to die. Christ Jesus as the Master Potter sculpts this person into a vessel for honored usage (Rom 9:21–24), but the person does not physically change shape. The essence of Christianity is comprehension that a thought-world exists as a real world that is not heaven but that is not tangible and “real,” measurable and observable. This so-called thought-world is part of a bridge between what is “real” and tangible and what is of heaven. And it is in this world of thought where a chasm exists that separates the thoughts of those who have been born of spirit and the thoughts of those who have no spiritual life. This chasm, however, isn’t observable to those human beings who are without spiritual life. For them, thoughts drift off into darkness unless there is demonic influence.

When a person is drawn from this world by the Father (John 6:44, 65) and given a second life or life-force through receipt of the divine breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] as the man Jesus received the breath of the Father in the form of a dove (Matt 3:16), this new life must choose *life* or *death* as Israel on the plains of Moab had to choose life or death. The *new self* or *creature* that chooses life by hearing the words of Jesus and believing the One who sent Him does not come under judgment or condemnation but

passes from death to life whereas the *new creature* who chooses death does not believe either Jesus or the Father, but argues some variation of because Jesus fulfilled the commandments His disciples do not have to keep the laws of God, a nonsensical argument if made in any other context. An equally senseless argument is that Christians are under grace, but Jews are under the law, so Jews have to keep the commandments whereas Christians do not.

The person, when born of spirit, who will walk as Jesus walked, who will imitate Paul as he imitated Jesus, will keep the commandments by faith. This person is under grace. And because this person willingly chooses to keep the laws of God, there is no reason to judge this person, who will righteously judge him or herself and will condemn him or herself when he or she fails to live up to the expectations of the household of God.

Therefore, Jesus sculpts the person who chose death by choosing to reject keeping the precepts of the law into a vessel for dishonorable usage, a vessel of wrath, a vessel of destruction to be endured for a season. One lump, Israel, made alive by the Father through Him giving to this nation His Spirit. Now not a physical nation but a spiritual nation that was not before a nation (1 Pet 2:9–10); a chosen people who, literally, have been chosen one at a time to be drawn by the Father from all of humankind. This is the Israel who has life and death placed before them on a particular “day,” which is not a twenty-four hour period but a short period of darkness after spiritual birth with light coming from this darkness.

Once a person chooses death, the person will seldom, if ever, change his or her mind although change is possible (2 Tim 2:21). And from what’s seen in Scripture, there is a time when changing one’s mind doesn’t effect the outcome of the person: if Israel acknowledged its sin but still stood condemned to death before God, which is the case when Israel refused to enter into the Promised Land when the promise of entering stood, then there is a time when changing one’s mind about whether to choose life or death will be ignored by God. If repentance is to have any meaning, then repentance must occur while the promise of entering into God’s rest still stands. This promise only stands on the person’s day of salvation, which again is not a calendar day.

Christendom does not understand that there will be two harvests of God, both represented by the grain harvests of Judea. The first harvest (the harvest of firstfruits, the barley harvest) began with the resurrection of Christ Jesus, the First of the firstfruits, and continues until His return when judgments are revealed for all who have been born of spirit. This is the initial harvest that ripens by the coming of the early rains, with these early rains forming the shadow and copy of the giving of the renewing breath of God to the holy nation of Israel.

The second harvest (the main crop wheat harvest) occurs after the thousand year long reign of Christ Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. This harvest occurs when Death and Hades give up all that is in them. This is the great White Throne Judgment, when every human being not previously born of spirit will be resurrected from death to receive the honor or condemnation of the person’s thoughts that either accuse and excuse the person, or accuse and not excuse the person, according to Paul’s gospel. This is the harvest of the latter rains, which do not come in the spring but in the late summer. Even though most of this harvest will have physically lived before and/or with the firstfruits, this latter harvest was not “watered” with the renewing breath of God until the last great day, the day following *Sukkot*. This harvest will be of the Buddhist, the Hindi, the Muslim, the ones who worshiped Zeus and Molech and any number of pagan

deities. None will be left out, except for those who had their judgments revealed upon Christ Jesus' return. The one who was without the law but who kept the precepts of the law will receive everlasting life. The one who sought righteousness by a different path will now obtain that righteousness by belief of the type expressed by the second thief on the cross (Luke 23:39–43).

The gospels record the beginning and end of Jesus' ministry, with very little of the intervening three years mentioned. What the gospels record is also the shadow and copy of the endtime ministry of the glorified Christ. Luke's gospel has a timing mark in chapter nineteen, when Jesus enters Jerusalem on the 10th day of Abib, four days before He is to be taken and crucified on the Preparation Day for the high Sabbath (John 19:31), the first day of Unleavened Bread. So when parables are told after Luke 19:28 is known with the precision of four days.

The cleansing of the ten lepers (Luke 17:11–19) occurs on Jesus' way to Jerusalem as He was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. This trip to Jerusalem is the same trip on which He will enter Jerusalem on the 10th of Abib. The events recorded between Luke 17:11 and Luke 19:28 occur in the few days prior to the 10th; for in Luke 18:31, Jesus said to His first disciples, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished." This is the third time that Jesus told His disciples that He would be taken and killed.

The next earlier timing mark is the Sabbath on which Jesus healed a man (Luke 14:1); so the telling of the Lazarus/Dives fable occurs between this Sabbath when He healed the man and when Jesus entered Jerusalem on the Sabbath that was the 10th of Abib. The continuity of narrative requires that Jesus leave the house of a ruler of the Pharisees where He ate and told the parable of the great banquet; that He be accompanied by great crowds (Luke 14:25; 15:1) along with the scribes and Pharisees that had, most likely, been at the house of the ruler of the Pharisees; that He teaches about the cost of becoming one of His disciples (Luke 14:17). Thus, the incident with the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18–30) comes as a logical outgrowth of teaching about the cost of discipleship.

Beginning with the Sabbath healing Jesus tells a series of parables that are thematically related: the invited guests do not come to a banquet given by a great man, so this man sends his servants out to bring to the banquet the poor and crippled, blind and lame. The maimed of Israel who could not be chosen as offerings to God if they were lambs; they would be "unclean" because of their infirmities. And the Pharisees treated them as if they were unclean.

The cost of discipleship relates to the great man who gave the banquet being able to finish what he began even though his invited guests did not come, with this cost of his guests not coming being tallied while the time for banquet is still a great ways off. The great man's invited guests were like salt that had lost its "saltiness," which when thrown out is neither good for the soil nor for the manure pile.

Tax collectors and sinners were drawing near to Jesus, for they were hearing about ones like themselves being gathered to fill the available seats at a great banquet. These publicans and sinners did not hear what Jesus said in the house of the ruler of the Pharisees, but they *knew* what was being said for the murmurings that would have taken place among the scribes and Pharisees would have carried the essence of the parable outward into the crowds. So Jesus adds to the Pharisees' discomfort by telling the parable of the ninety-nine sheep, who were like the Pharisees in that these sheep

were where they belonged. The shepherd leaves these sheep who are where they belong to go after the one that is lost, with great rejoicing to occur when the lost sheep (like the publicans and assorted sinners) are found by the shepherd. In the parable of the lost coin, a similar message is relayed, with Jesus adding, “I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents” (Luke 15:10), and Jesus launches into the parable of the prodigal son (vv. 11–32). So there is no narrative break, no break in thought, between when Jesus heals the man on the Sabbath and the beginning of Chapter 16. All could have occurred on the same day, or within a day or two. All probably occurred on the Sabbath when Jesus delivered the speech-acts of the Father in the form of figurative speech and healings.

Without a thematic break, Jesus tells the parable of the dishonest manager (Luke 16:1–13), who certainly could be likened to the scribes and Pharisees, “managers” of the secrets of God for Israel. Their debt to God as teachers who mistaught the principles of God was greater than that of Israelites who were being mistaught. Jesus finished the parable by saying that the one who is faithful in little will be faithful in much, for no servant can serve two masters, God and money. Jesus here stepped hard on the toes of the Pharisees who had shortly before eaten with Him. These Pharisees were certain that they served God, the justification for being called a *Pharisee*, and they sincerely believed that making money was their reasonable service as stewards of the treasures of God. So these scribes and Pharisees, all educated, intelligent men (not under-educated Galilean fishermen like Jesus’ first disciples) began to mock Jesus: Luke wrote, “The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard these things, and they ridiculed him (v. 14).

The Pharisees had taken one verbal punch after another since they had sat down to eat with Jesus on the Sabbath. Jesus had not cut them any slack. Telling them that they could be replaced by publicans and sinners was almost too much. Literally, Jesus had skewered those who sincerely believed they were above reproach. When Jesus figuratively reached into their wallets to show them their greed, these Pharisees hit back by ridiculing Jesus. *It is this ridicule that establishes the context for the Lazarus/Dives fable.*

IV.

Jesus did not like to be mocked. Jesus as the Son of *Theos* especially did not like being mocked by those creatures *Theos* had made from red clay mud. Therefore, in a brilliant overturning of tables, Jesus turns the mocking of the Pharisees back onto themselves: He calls them *Gentiles* without ever using the word, and He tells them in a way that only they can understand that they are *Gentile students at the feet of their Master*. Jesus uses the education of these Pharisees against them. Of Jesus’ first disciples, apparently only Luke has the education to understand or appreciate what Jesus does.

After being initially mocked, Jesus tells the Pharisees that they justify themselves before men but God knows their hearts (Luke 16:15); that what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God. Then Jesus points to the apparent place where these mocking Pharisees transgress the Law of God, and this place is in allowing, even condoning divorce. The Pharisees are guilty because they have another god other than the Most High: this god is money and prestige, the perks of being religious rulers under authorities from Rome. And they have transferred their guilt to others by apparently “selling” divorce decrees, an unstated but relatively obvious accusation based upon the presentation order of subject matter.

Jesus now tells these mocking Pharisees an after-death-fortune-reversal parable in the format of a Greek Cynic fable. Jesus tells these Pharisees a fiction, a story that suggests pagan “truths,” a story that is definitely not Hebrew in origin or a story coming from Scripture. By Jesus telling these Pharisees a Greek pagan story, He calls them “Greeks,” and not just any *Greeks*, but Greek students who are hearing their Master deliver to them a childhood instructional fable.

As an educated person, a religious leader, a community leader, how would you like being called a dog, or even worse, a pup nursing the paps of a bastard from which you will get only condemnation? This is how those mocking Pharisees felt when they heard Jesus relay the Lazarus/Dives parable. They understood perfectly the reason why Jesus was telling them a Cynic narrative. You too would understand if you were an educated person in that age of Classicism. But you are probably not so educated. So to you, the Lazarus parable is about entering Hades at death, (while your siblings still live) and about an unbridgeable chasm separating the just from the unjust. Which are you? On which side of the abyss will you enter Hades? Do you know? If you do, then you know what your judgment is even before it has been revealed, and so does everyone else. You see the problem: you cannot know what your judgment will be until Christ comes to reveal it to you. If this were not the case, those who did great works in the name of Christ Jesus but who taught disciples to be lawless entered Hades and will enter Hades with the rich man. Some of them will have “stewed” for two millennia waiting for the “mistake” to be corrected, but these teachers of lawlessness will be denied in their resurrection (Matt 7:21–23). They will not enter into Abraham’s bosom, from where they would have to be cast into the lake of fire when judgments are revealed.

If a person enters either Abraham’s bosom [i.e., paradise] or Hades upon death, and if judgments are not to be revealed until Jesus’ return, then what assurance does the person have who is in paradise that he [or she] will remain there when judgments are revealed? And from where did this person receive eternal life, the gift of God, given to those who have no sin imputed to them? The answer to the questions is that no person is born with an immortal soul that must go somewhere at death. The flesh of every person returns to dust. The person who has not been born of Spirit has no other life, and ceases to exist except as a name in the book of remembrance, a name that will be raised from the dead in the great White Throne Judgment. The person who has been born of spirit is a son of God who enters timelessness as one who sleeps under the altar of God (Rev 6:9–11), awaiting awakening and the revealing of judgments. Jesus used “sleep” as an analogy for death. So the flesh sleeping forms the shadow and copy of what occurs to the spiritual son of God that had been domiciled in a tent of flesh when the flesh dies.

After Jesus tells the Lazarus/Dives fable, the Pharisees are no longer present. They have left, for they are now determined to kill Jesus, who has brought a tempest upon them.

It isn’t always easy to get oneself murdered, especially when the crowds believe that the person is the prophesied Son of David (Matt 21:9), the “*adoni*” who sits at the right hand of God. Therefore, Jesus had to provoke the scribes and Pharisees to get them to do what they must do before He would be free to marry another. And as it was, if Jesus had not kept quiet before Pilate, He would most likely have been set free.

But Jesus had to die on the Passover’s Preparation Day, and He had to die “between the evenings” as Pharisees then reckoned when the Passover lambs were to be slain. His provoking the Pharisees had to coincide with the Passover season; thus, on a Sabbath

shortly before Jesus entered Jerusalem as Lamb and High Priest, Jesus spent a day verbally stabbing Pharisees who would determine whether He lived or died. And the nastiest wound He inflicted was calling these Pharisees Gentiles, and in the process making Him their instructional master. Not even Jesus openly calling them hypocrites and vipers cut them any deeper.

V.

There are as many explications of the Lazarus/Dives story as there are denominations. Every one of these explications either supports the idea of the “soul” of a person immediately going to Hades upon death, or supports some variation of the story being set in the future after judgments are revealed. Even cynical scholars have difficulty accepting the realization that Jesus really told a pagan Greek after-death-fortune-reversal story as a means to an end. It is easier, and more convenient to ascribe to Luke an evolving sense of the afterlife, revealed for the first time in this fable.

The Lazarus/Dives parable is important for another reason: it is an example of Jesus telling a fictional story, for Lazarus is not a real person, nor is the unnamed rich man a real person. Both figures are literary constructs, devices used in a figurative sense to deliver a differing message than the message that would be “normally” assigned to the linguistic icons of the text. Understanding the “figurativeness” of the fable becomes an important stepping stone in understanding that everything Jesus spoke were the words of the Father, which were about heavenly things that could only be “named” with icons used for linguistic objects in this world. Therefore, nothing Jesus spoke is as it seems. At best a hypostatical relationship exists in which the usually assigned objects for the linguistic icons become a type of the invisible and concealed heavenly objects that the Father intended for the words Jesus delivered. This means that the Father had Jesus deliver the Lazarus/Dives fable not for the usually assigned meaning but for an assignment of objects that has the Father telling these Pharisees that they are to Him as *the nations* are to Israel.

Jesus concluded the fable with an especially important statement: if a person will not believe Moses, the person will not believe one raised from the dead, with Jesus being this one.

Unfortunately, the fable will be accepted as “fact” by biblical illiterates until Christ returns to reveal judgments.

What Did Jesus Promise The Thief?

I.

A comma, a late addition to the Greek text, introduced by a medieval scribe in an obscure scriptorium provides half of the scriptural support for endtime disciples believing that they will immediately go to heaven upon death. But the textual logic imbedded throughout Scripture will not have a thief preceding Jesus into heaven. So a popular passage must be read without the punctuation that was added to help “clarify” meaning.

Scripture does not come from the 1st-Century CE to endtime disciples in the form presently received, but comes through 2nd and 3rd Century manuscript fragments written in uncials (all capital letters), without word division, punctuation, or aspiration marks. Therefore, to assign to a medieval copy precision not found in the earliest fragments is folly ... all of humanity is represented at Calvary in the three individuals crucified on the midweek Preparation day for the killing of the Passover in the 31st year of this Common Era.

On either side of Jesus was a lawbreaker. One blasphemed Christ, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!” (Luke 23:39). This criminal wanted down from the cross before he died. He wanted to save his physical life. He did not really believe that Jesus was the Christ, hence his mocking question. He received nothing from Jesus, not even an acknowledgement of his existence.

The second thief was more honorable than the first to speak. He rebuked the other, for he believed that Jesus was the Christ. He asked the first if he did not fear God. He acknowledged that they were worthy of death, that they were receiving their just due for their transgressions of the law. But he said that Jesus had done nothing wrong. He then turned to Jesus and said, as Luke recorded the account in a literal Greek to English transcription, “And he said to Jesus Remember me Lord when you come in the kingdom of you” (Luke 23:42).

Jesus heard this second criminal acknowledge his own transgressions of the law and that the law is good. Jesus heard this second criminal acknowledge Him as God and express belief that He, Jesus, would be resurrected back to life to receive the kingdom of heaven. And because this second criminal in type fulfills the righteous demands of the law as well as professes that Jesus is Lord (Rom 10:9), Jesus tells this second criminal that he will receive everlasting life: “And said to him Jesus, Truly I say to you[,] today with me you will be in paradise” (Luke 23:43). The problematic comma is bracketed.

The comma is not in the earliest manuscripts that, again, do not have punctuation, accents, or even the letters broken into words. If it were placed on the other side of “today” the statement Jesus made would read, *I tell you today, you will be with me in paradise*, which now agrees with the fact that Jesus would not “that day” be in paradise, but would be dead and buried in the Garden Tomb. Jesus does not ascend to heaven until the morning of the fourth day (John 20:17). It is textually impossible for this criminal to be in paradise with Jesus the day of their crucifixion.

Jesus said that He would give one sign concerning His identity: “For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be

three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt 12:40). Jesus and the two criminals were crucified on the Preparation Day for the high Sabbath (John 19:31). He was cutoff mid week as prophesied (both mid-calendar week and in the middle of seven years of ministry), and he fulfilled the only sign He gave as proof that He was of God. He was three days and threes nights in the heart of the earth. He had not ascended to heaven prior to when Mary Magdalene saw Him the morning of the first day of the week. Therefore, the criminal could not be with Jesus in paradise on the 14th of Abib.

Heaven is timeless. From the perspective of the heavenly realm, everything that happens occurs on the same day. So if an argument is made that “today” references the unchanging moment that would be “the present” in the heavenly realm, then not only would Jesus ascend to His God and Father *today* but the resurrection of disciples upon Jesus’ return two millennia later would also be *today*, the same day. Thus, confining the narrative perspective to within time, the criminal to whom Jesus promised everlasting life did not ascend into heaven on the 14th of Abib, the day when Jesus promised that he would be with Jesus in paradise; for Jesus did not ascend to paradise that day. The comma is misplaced.

The cross kills by suffocation (and by shock as modern research has shown). A crucified person loses his or her breath; thus, the cross serves as a representative for all means of death from loss of breath. It is the apt symbol representing death. Therefore, being raised up on the cross symbolizes short term life after death, for a person doesn’t immediately die when crucified. The two criminals lived after they are dead in a symbolic sense. Once raised on a cross no one was going to come down alive. Death was declared when the person was raised up. So the two criminals serve as lively shadows for all who will appear before God in the great White Throne Judgment, when every person who has not previously been born of Spirit will receive “a second birth” through resurrection from death. As the first thief mocked Christ, many who are returned to life will want to save their physical lives. Some will acknowledge that they were worthy of death and will be like the second thief. It will be this latter group that will receive everlasting life when resurrected in the great White Throne Judgment. It will take no longer for those who are returned to life to determine their fate than it took for the two thieves.

A misplaced comma did not send the second criminal into heaven on the 14th of Abib 31 CE. He is not there yet from the perspective of being within time, for no one will precede another except for the man Jesus who came down from heaven. All who have received the promise of eternal life, and all who have been born of Spirit will be resurrected upon Christ Jesus’ return when judgments are revealed (1 Co 4:5), with those who have been born of Spirit being either resurrected to life or to condemnation (John 5:28–29). It is merely wishful thinking to believe that a misplaced comma made a thief the last Adam.

Jesus’ promise to the thief, made while both still lived physically, was the inheritance of eternal life when judgments are revealed. He would have extended the same promise to the lawyer (Luke 10:25) and to the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18) if the lawyer had put into practice what the lawyer knew to do, and if the young ruler had sold all he had, given his wealth to the poor, and followed Jesus. Neither was willing to extend love or faith. The second thief was willing to extend both.

The Mark of the Beast:

$\chi\xi\varsigma'$ — *Chi Xi Stigma*

I.

No three Greek letters, purporting to represent a number and the name of a man, have ever been more poorly translated than $\chi\xi\varsigma'$ [*chi xi stigma*]? The textual call for wisdom (Rev 13:18) apparently went unanswered; for in Indo-European languages [of which Greek is one], the Arabic numeral /6/ phonetically requires an /x/ sound. In Greek, “six” is “hex” or the /x/ sound with rough breathing preceding the sound. So three “sixes” as in /666/ will require the repetition of the /x/ sound three times, but the /x/ sound only occurs once in $\chi\xi\varsigma'$, so 666 cannot be a valid translation of *chi xi stigma*.

II.

The logic for translating $\chi\xi\varsigma'$ as 666 comes from *chi* visually appearing as a /x/ and from *stigma* representing two sharpened or pointed sticks, as in two crossed sticks, which could also be made to visually appear as a /x/. So the wisdom behind framing one phonetic /x/ with two visual /x/s — as if the two visual /x/s were the two thieves on either side of Jesus — was enough for someone to produce a mistranslation that has caused a Western cultural aversion to the numeral 666.

To read $\chi\xi\varsigma'$ with the required wisdom, a person must return to Rev 13:18, which is part of John’s vision that doesn’t occur until the Lord’s day is at hand (Rev 1:10), when the described phenomena will soon happen (*cf.* Rev 1:1; 22:6–7, 10). Here true wisdom is required: if this vision of John’s is about events that have not yet happened, then the unsealing of the scroll seen in the vision (chaps 5–6) has not yet happened. If this scroll remains sealed, then all of what occurs within the vision after the seals are removed remains to happen. The scarlet woman and the red dragon and the heavenly signs and the kingdom of this world becoming the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ — all of these things and events are futuristic. The messages to the seven named churches also remain futuristic, meaning that the seven churches on the ancient Roman mail route through Asia Minor have a hypostatical relationship with seven endtime spiritual churches that cannot be visually seen, but exist in the heavenly realm on the Lord’s day.

Reading the mark that requires wisdom begins not with / χ /, but with the last letter / ς / — *stigma* — an obsolete letter used to represent a number in the same way that / π / represents the fraction 22/7s. The letter / ς / was between the fifth and sixth letters of the Greek alphabet, but the letter had not been in common usage for a century when John recorded his vision. The use of / ς / should clue the auditor that there is something unusual about the three letters that would cause the third letter to function differently than the first two.

The last letter of the mark, / ς /, has a name that carries with it a relatively narrow “usual” assignment of meaning. *Strong’s* number for *stigma* is 4742, $\sigma\tau\iota\gamma\mu\alpha$, from the root $\sigma\tau\iota\zeta\omega$, usually meaning “to stick” or “to prick” as in a mark incised or punched to denote ownership. Thus, *stigma* is the action of pricking or punching a mark of ownership; it is used as the Greek linguistic icon that most closely is aligned to the

English icon /*tattoo*/. It is a tattoo, or the action of tattooing. It does not produce the Arabic numeral /6/ in any reasonable form of translation, or transliteration. And since this letter alone represents a “mark” or “marking” as in ownership, the remainder of the “mark of the beast” should logically be that mark or should describe that mark which is tattooed as the sign of ownership.

Here wisdom is truly required. *YHWH* said to Moses, “You are to speak to the people of Israel and say, “Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths [note the plural form], for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you”” (Ex 31:12–13). So the Sabbaths of God, with these Sabbaths listed in Leviticus chapter 23, are “a sign” that God sanctifies Israel, the nation that now consists of all who have with circumcised hearts (Rom 2:29). Therefore, when that old dragon, Satan, and his angels are cast to earth (Rev 12:9–10), two signs exist: the first sign (1) is the Sabbaths of God, a sign made between God and Israel that this holy nation (1 Pet 2:9) may know that God sanctifies none other. The second sign (2) is / $\chi\xi$ /, the tattoo [/s/] of which on the hand or in the forehead [referring to a mindset] denotes the person being the property of the beast that the whole earth follows as the whole earth worships the dragon (Rev 13:3–4).

Again, the sign of God is Sabbath observance; the sign of the Antichrist is the tattoo of / $\chi\xi$ /.

Now the dragon, when cast into time, goes after the remnant who keeps the commandments and have the testimony of Jesus (Rev 12:17). Keeping the commandments requires keeping the Sabbath commandment. The sign that the offspring of “the woman” of Revelation 12:13–17 bears [or is marked with] is the Sabbaths of God, the first sign, the sign that denotes those human beings who have been sanctified by God during the first half of the seven end-time years of tribulation, when the man of perdition attempts to change times and the law (Dan 7:25).

If the sign of those humans who have been sanctified by God — the sign of those who constitute the holy nation Israel, a people with circumcised hearts that was not before a people (1 Pet 2:10) — is observance of the Sabbaths of God, then those human beings who take the tattoo [/s/] of *chi xi* [/ $\chi\xi$ /], the second sign, do not observe the Sabbaths of God. Therefore, during the first half of the seven end-time years, observance of the plural Sabbaths of God marks those who are sanctified by God in a manner analogous to how $\chi\xi$ s’ marks those who are of the beast and who will be slain by Christ Jesus on His return (*cf.* Rev 19:20–21; Isa 66:15–17). These two signs form a chiral image of one another, for the first marks those who are of God and the second marks those who are of the Antichrist. And if Sabbath observance denotes those who kept the commandments, then *chi xi stigma* denotes those who do not keep the commandments ... visible Christendom, today, prides itself on not keeping the commandments, the Law, but on being under grace.

The prophet Isaiah offers more information about those whom the Lord will slay upon His return: “Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go into the gardens, following one in the midst, eating pig’s flesh and the abomination and mice, shall come to an end together, declares the Lord” (66:17).

God sanctifies those who observe the plural Sabbaths of God, with Sabbath observance being an outwardly visible sign of Divine sanctification. The tattoo of $\chi\xi$ marks those who do not keep the Sabbaths, and who sanctify and purify themselves, who eat swine’s flesh, and who will be slain by Christ Jesus ... does anyone recognize a

theology that does not keep the plural Sabbaths of God, that eats swine, that sanctifies itself through its liturgy? Even Moslems, who refuse to keep the Sabbaths of God, will not eat swine's flesh.

Returning to the front of $\chi\xi\varsigma'$. The first letter, χ , produces the phonetic $/ch/$ sound, and is the common substitute for $/Christ/$ as in $/Xmas/$ for $/Christmas/$. Roman Emperor Constantine claimed to have seen the superimposed Greek letters $chi-rho$ or $\chi\rho$ as a heavenly sign on the eve of a battle against overwhelming forces. Constantine used the sign to energize his legions, while publicly professing conversion to Christianity, saying he would conquer by the sign of the tipped cross. His troops won the battle and prevailed throughout Asia Minor, thereby consolidating the empire that had shortly before been divided among four regents.

Constantine's conversion to Christianity is not how "conversion" works scripturally. His actions after his alleged conversion suggest that nothing other than an opportunity of political expedience occurred. Constantine's acceptance of a Greek belief paradigm brought an end to the Roman emperor-worship cult by which the empire had long sustained itself. It was Constantine's acceptance of χ as a representation of the "Christ" that has made the "cross" the universally recognized symbol of Christianity. A Roman emperor made χ the sign of Christ; God didn't "make" this correspondence.

Since early in the 4th-Century, the $/cross/$ has equated to $/Christ/$ throughout the Roman world and all of Western civilization. Only a few minor denominations and fellowships, with the Jehovah Witnesses being the largest, do not use the $cross$ to represent $Christ$. Even scholars regularly translate the Greek linguistic icon $\sigma\tau\alpha\upsilon\rho\delta\varsigma$ — $stauros$ as the English icon $/cross/$, when $stauros$ would have a usual object-to-icon assignment of a "stake" or "pole set upright" if it were found outside the Bible.

Since a Roman made χ the shortened representation of Christ; and since Jesus was killed on a Roman $\sigma\tau\alpha\upsilon\rho\delta\varsigma$ or $stauros$, Constantine's acceptance of χ as a representation of the "Christ" has made the "cross" the universally recognized symbol of Christianity. And until the 4th-CE, the Cross was represented by the Roman letter $/x/$. So if the three letters, $\chi\xi\varsigma'$, were to be read by a fourth century Roman as individual letters, this Roman would read these three Greek letters as $/Christ-x-tattoo/$ or $the\ tattoo\ of\ Christ's\ cross$.

The cross is the image of the beast that is dealt a death wound by Christ, a wound that occurred when the two witness are publicly resurrected, that occurred when the Holy Spirit $\Pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\ \text{\textit{Άγιον}}$ is poured out on all flesh, thereby liberating everyone from indwelling sin and death. The mark of the beast is the mark of "Death," the fourth horseman of the Apocalypse (Rev 6:7–8), the fourth beast of Daniel chapter 7, on whose head is ten horns, three of which are uprooted by the little horn that comes by the workings of Satan (who enlivens and empowers the man of perdition). The mark of Death is $\chi\xi\varsigma'$.

III.

How would a pagan Roman have read the mark of the beast, $\chi\xi\varsigma'$? He or she would have read it as the "tattoo [s] of Christ's [χ] cross [ξ]." Should an end-time disciple read $\chi\xi\varsigma'$ as the "tattoo of Christ's cross"? Yes, this is how $\chi\xi\varsigma'$ should be read. Why, then, is $\chi\xi\varsigma'$ translated as 666? Because someone centuries ago could read the mark of the beast as a politically sensitive symbol.

Would you, as a scholar in a mediaeval scriptorium, have gone to your patron and said that “the Cross” is the mark of the beast? To do so would have been suicidal as well as against personal beliefs held because God had consigned the Church to mental servitude in spiritual Babylon.

A dishonest mistranslation of $\chi\xi\varsigma'$ was really the only option facing mediaeval translators. But the logic for the cross becoming the universally recognized symbol of Christendom is truly remarkable; for if Jesus would have been killed with a mace, would a “mace” become the revered symbol of the Savior? What about an axe?

The person who wears a crucifix wears the image of a murder weapon.

In the Spirit on the Lord's Day

I.

The phrase, "Lord's day," was not used to designate the first day of the week until near the close of the second century CE, when it was used in the apocryphal *Gospel of Peter*, a text with so little spiritual understanding that one would think it was of purely pagan origin. The phrase is not found in the sayings of Jesus; however, its echo — the day of the Lord [*YHWH*] — is commonly used by the Prophets, but always for events at the close of the age.

John wrote, "I was in spirit in the Lord's Day" (Rev 1:10).

When was John *in spirit*? Was he *in spirit* on a particular day of the week, or *in spirit* as in a vision, or *in spirit* at the end of the age, when the prophets of old used the expression *day of the Lord* and *that day* as euphemisms for the coming of the Messiah?

Was John in the flesh when he saw the events he describes? Or was he, as he claims, *in spirit* as in being a spiritual creature?

In his vision, Paul did not know whether he was *in the flesh* or *in spirit* when he visited the third heaven (2 Cor 12:2–3), also the location of John's vision. So for John to say that he was *in spirit* and not in the flesh introduces a level of complexity that has not been well explored.

Revelation begins, "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must *soon* take place" (1:1 emphasis added). If the events described in John's vision must "soon" take place, then the time setting for the vision is not the 1st-Century CE. No assignment of meaning to *soon* allows for the passage of two millennia to transpire between when John transcribed his vision and when the events described within the vision take place.

The vision closes with,

- "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must *soon* take place" (22:6);
- "And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is *near*" (v. 10);
- "Behold, I am coming *soon*" (v. 12);
- "He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming *soon*'" (v. 20 – emphasis added in each cite).

If *the Lord's day* is *the day of the Lord* then John's vision occurs at the end of the age, when dominion is taken from the four demonic kings (Dan 7:9–14) and the kingdom of this world is given to Christ Jesus (Rev 11:15). At that time, all of the events described within the vision will "soon" occur. The vision is, now, true and trustworthy, but not for the 1st-Century or even for the 20th-Century.

On a specific day, dominion over humankind will be taken by force from the prince of this world and his angels (Rev 12:7–10). The single kingdom of this world will be given to one like *a son of man*. This delivering of the kingdom to Christ is a one time occurrence. It doesn't happen earlier than *the time of the end*, and it hasn't happened

yet. Therefore, humankind has not yet arrived at that moment in time when the seals on the scroll are removed (Rev chap 6).

In the vision, the angel tells John not to seal the vision. If the vision doesn't occur in the 1st-Century but in the 21st-Century, then the letters that John is told to deliver to the seven churches were not to be delivered in the 1st-Century, but are to be delivered in the 21st, meaning that God has again used shadows to seal and keep secret a vision He openly placed before the saints.

But at the close of the 1st-Century the seven named churches co-existed on a Roman mail route. Their existence (plus the fact that the letters accurately reflect the strengths and weakness of each) has caused theologians for nearly two millennia to wrestle with the imagery and symbolism of John's vision. But all of this wrestling has produced a plethora of misunderstandings.

In Revelation, appearance functions as attributes. For example, Jesus functions as the Lamb of God. He doesn't appear as a lamb in chapter 1, verses 12 through 20; however, once past the seven letters, He appears as a Lamb, slain, with seven horns and seven eyes, which are seven spirits. These seven spirits function as eyes as Jesus functions as the Lamb of God. The seven churches will now function as seven horns. Thus, the seven churches are not 1st-Century fellowships, but spiritual fellowships in the same way that the seven eyes are seven spirits.

John sees events that will occur at the end of the age when the single kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man. He is *in spirit* when he witnesses those things that no person in the flesh can observe. In vision, he entered a world without physical referents and he has no need to seal his vision for it doesn't occur until the end of the age is at hand.

Acts 13:2

Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabus, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabus and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. (Acts 13:1–3)

I.

A proof text Trinitarians use to justify their assignment of personhood to the Holy Spirit [Πνευμα Ἅγιον] is Acts 13:2, where Luke writes, “λειτουργοῦντων δὲ αὐτῶν τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ νηστεόντων εἶπεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅλιον, Ἀφορίσατε δὴ μοι τὸν Βαρναβάν καὶ Σαῦλον εἰς τὸ ἔργον ὃ προσκέκλημαι αὐτούς” (a literal translation of which is, “Ministering and they to the Lord and fasting, said the spirit the holy, ‘Set apart then for me Barnabas and Saul to the work which I have called them’”). What Luke writes certainly has the *pneuma holy* [πνεῦμα τὸ ἅλιον] or “breath holy” speaking to those who were ministering and fasting. But does this mean that this *breath* has personhood? Or is it the Father or Christ Jesus that speaks to those who were fasting, and what is heard are either the Father or the Son’s words coming through the Father’s or the Son’s divine breath?

When Saul, who would be renamed Paul, was on his way to Damascus to do more mischief, a light suddenly flashed from heaven—and falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me” (Acts 9:4). Saul heard the voice of the Lord; he heard words transmitted by the divine breath of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ]; he heard a holy breath speak to him in Greek words. And he asks, “Who are you, Lord [κύριε]” (v. 5). The speaker identifies Himself, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting” (same verse). So Saul heard the voice of Jesus, who was then a life-giving spirit. Jesus was not then a man speaking through controlled modulations of physical breath, with these modulations causing sound waves to travel through the air by one gas molecule bumping into another, transferring energy to it, until a human voice is heard feet or yards away by pulsating air molecules bumping against eardrums. Saul heard the voice of the glorified Jesus through modulations of the breath of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ — from Rom 8:9]; he heard the spirit [πνεῦμα] of Christ speak within his mind.

To hear with the ears requires sound waves to be formed in the envelope of air surrounding a person’s head, but the divine words of God are not heard with the ears but within the mind.

The Psalmist wrote,

O Lord, how manifold are your works! / In wisdom have you made them all; / the earth is full of your creatures. / ... When you hide your face, they are dismayed; / when you take away their breath, they die / and return to dust. / When you send forth your Spirit [breath], they are created, / and you renew the face of the ground. (Ps 104:27, 29–30)

The divine breath of *YHWH* creates life and renews the face of the ground, but it was *Yah*, or *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος] who created all that has been made (John 1:3) — *YHWH* is one, who are two [ὁ λόγος & τὸν θεόν] that function as one deity as Adam and Eve were two who became one flesh (Gen 2:24) through marriage. All things were created by ὁ λόγος (John 1:3); thus, it was by the divine breath of ὁ λόγος that life was created. This, now, leaves the divine breath of τὸν θεόν to renew (as in recreate, or spiritually create) the face of the ground ... in the structure of Hebraic poetics, being created is physical, the work of *Yah* [*YH*], whereas renewing the face of the ground is spiritual, the work of the conjoined *YHWH*. **To renew what has been created is to cause the physical to become spiritual in a manner similar to the coming of the new heavens and new earth after death has been thrown into the lake of fire** (Rev 21:1).

When the *Logos/Theos* entered His creation as His only Son (John 3:16), the man Jesus of Nazareth, He spoke only the words of the Father, the previously Unknown God [τὸν θεόν]. But these words of the Father were (for lack of a better phrase) too big to be conveyed by modulations of air; thus, the recorded healings that Jesus performed are part of the speech-acts of the Father that Jesus delivered through the Father's divine breath: πνευμα ἅγιον, usually now translated as the Holy Spirit.

- In the seven recorded Sabbath healings, the words Jesus spoke coupled with the healings constituted the speech-acts of the Father as He, the Father, delivered a message to Israel through Jesus on these Sabbath days.
- When Jesus asked the Father to glorify His name, a voice came from heaven that the crowd heard as thunder (John 12:28–30). “Sound” was heard for the crowd's sake, but this *sound* was not intelligible to the crowd even though some said that an angel had spoken to Jesus.
- When the prophet Daniel was by the Tigris, he lifted up his eyes and saw a vision. Only he saw the vision. The men with him felt a great trembling and fled (Dan 10:7).
- At Sinai, when the Lord spoke, the people heard thunder and the sound of trumpets, and they saw flashes of lightning and the mountain smoking. They were afraid, and they asked Moses not to let God speak to them lest they die (Ex 20:18–20).

No mortal man is able to hear the voice of God as His divine breath [πνευμα ἅγιον] conveys His words or to see God unless God has specifically chosen the person to be an instrument for Him. The utterances of God must cross dimensions, and they don't come across as precisely enunciated words in a human language that all men can hear; rather, for most of humankind, the utterances of God occur as groaning of the spirit, perceived through feelings and subconscious suggestions. Yet for the person whom God has chosen to do a work for Him, the utterances of God will be heard as perfectly enunciated words, and not as feelings arising from a person's subconscious. The man Jesus heard the words of the Father as Moses heard the words of *Yah* and as Saul heard the words of the glorified Jesus when he was on the road to Damascus.

When Paul was arrested in Jerusalem, he asked to speak to the people. And he recounted the story of his conversion. He said,

And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there [Damascus], came to me, and standing by me said to me, “Brother Saul, receive your sight.” And at that very hour I

received my sight and saw him. And he said, “The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from his mouth; for you will be a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard.” (Acts 22:12–15)

Ananias told Paul that he, Paul, was commissioned to be a witness for God, reporting what he saw and heard. To be this witness, Paul would—

1. Know the will of God;
2. See the Righteous One;
3. And hear the voice of the Righteous One.

Paul writes to the saints at Corinth that, “According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation ... no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 3:10–11). Elsewhere, he writes, “If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing you are a command of the Lord. If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized” (1 Cor 14:3–38). So Paul writes that he, not others who came from Jerusalem, knows the will of God, and lays the foundation for the spiritual house of God. Paul’s claim is both bold and based upon Paul receiving his gospel not from any man but “through a revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal 1:12).

Certainly Paul preached his gospel privately to those who seemed influential in Jerusalem in order to make sure he was not running in vain (Gal 2:2). About this he writes, “And from those who seemed to be influential (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those, I say, who seemed influential added nothing to me” (v. 6).

Paul learned nothing [*added nothing to me*] from the first disciples in Jerusalem fourteen years after his calling; so the testimony of Paul is that he, Paul, learned the will of God directly through revelation and not from any person.

Addressing the second point (*see the Righteous One*), Paul writes, “I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it. I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven ... and I know that this man was caught up to paradise ... and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter” (2 Cor 12:1–4).

When Paul was caught up to the third heaven, he would have seen the Righteous One. He cannot say for certain whether he was in the body or out, apparently meaning that he saw himself in the third heaven but he didn’t know whether the experience was entirely within a vision or whether he actually saw himself in heaven. Either way, he heard things he was not able to relay to others. So Paul records the fulfillment of the second of the three things Ananias told him.

Since Paul recorded the fulfillment of the first two of the three things Ananias prophesied, disciples should expect to find in Scripture confirmation of the third thing: hearing a call from the mouth of the Righteous One or hearing the voice of God.

The utterances of God will be—and really can only be—conveyed by the divine breath of God [*πνευμα ἄγιον*]. Thus, for Paul to hear the voice of God, he must hear the Holy Spirit [*again, πνευμα ἄγιον*] speak in words to him.

- If an anointed one hears the voice of God, this anointed one hears the Holy Spirit speak words rather than merely “hearing” the Holy Spirit through the groaning of the spirit conveyed in feelings and subconscious thoughts.

- Ananias prophesied that Paul would hear the voice of God, the sound of which can only be conveyed through utterance by the Holy Spirit.

Too many disciples sloppily speak of the Holy Spirit telling them to do this or to do that when they have heard nothing with their ears or their minds. Rather, they have had a feeling of some sort, and they conclude that the feeling they experienced was the Holy Spirit speaking to them ... indeed, that feeling might have come from the deep groaning of the spirit, or it might be from the person's mind recalling nearly forgotten knowledge. There is no reliable way to truly distinguish one from the other.

How can the person know for certain if a feeling has come from the Holy Spirit or from another spirit? The answer: only by testing the spirit.

Did the Holy Spirit tell WWII veteran Max Archer, then an infantry corporal in the winter of 1944, to throw his boot across the room one night when his patrol was getting ready to go out? Hearing no voice but feeling a strong urge, he threw his boot across the room while getting dressed. And just as soon as he threw the boot, he thought about how stupid the act was. He retrieved his boot and put it on. But the few extra minutes that it took for him to get his boot caused him to leave late. Every other member of the patrol was killed before he caught up with his squad.

Years later, as a Sabbatarian disciple Max credited the Holy Spirit for intervening and saving his life. He retold the story by saying that the Holy Spirit told him to throw the boot across the room. Yet he acknowledges that he heard nothing with either his ears or his mind. What he experienced was a feeling—and for most disciples, this is how communication through the spirit occurs.

But the Apostle Paul was an exception: he heard the voice of God. He heard uttered words as apparently did those with Paul on several occasions.

When Max Archer told the story of his brush with death his breath didn't need personhood for the words conveyed by his voice to be heard by those near him. Nor does the breath [πνεύμα] of God need personhood for the voice of God to be heard by those chosen to hear words with the mind and not to just feel the groaning of the Spirit.

Hearing a call from the mouth of God (what was prophesied for Paul) is, in this era, a rare circumstance reserved for those appointed for a specific task. This rare occurrence has been devalued by the many who claim to have heard a call, yet preach lawlessness to Israel. Therefore, it is here expressly stated that unless a person hears actual words within his or her mind, words that the person cannot easily distinguish from words heard by the ears, the person has not heard the Holy Spirit. At best, all the person has *heard* is the groaning of the Spirit. Usually, however, the person hears his or her own ego at work. The person is deceived by the desires of the flesh.

When the Holy Spirit or breath holy [πνεύμα ἅγιον] spoke to Barnabus, Saul, and the others praying and fasting, the words were those of the Father, heard through modulations of the Father's divine breath as actual words from the mouth of the Righteous One. What Luke records is the fulfillment of the third point that Ananias prophesied.

What is *the Law of Moses*? The Imprecise Linguistic Referent

I.

But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. ... When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them. But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses. (Acts 15:1–5)

What is the Law of Moses? Many Christian theologians have created arguments to “prove” that disciples of Christ Jesus are not under the law of Moses, but none of these arguments identify the substance of, or location of this allegedly abolished law. Rather, the arguments are usually against the Sinai covenant, made on the third day of the third month of the year in which Israel left Egypt. So is the Law of Moses the Sinai [Horeb] covenant (Ex chaps 19–24)? Or is the Law of Moses the Moab covenant (Deut chaps 29–32)? Or is the law of Moses the covenant God made with Israel on the day that He led this nation out of Egypt, with this covenant being the Passover covenant (Ex chaps 12–14) made in Egypt? And where is circumcision found in the Law of Moses? Where, on Israel’s journey between the Sea of Reeds [the Red Sea] and the River Jordan, does Moses or God through Moses command Israel to be circumcised?

The Law of Moses is a vague linguistic phrase that refers to everything Moses wrote. It can be nothing else; thus, it is the Torah, five books that represent the testimony of Moses.

Within the Torah, Moses is the mediator of at least three covenants between God and Israel, not one. In addition, God tells Moses on at least two occasions that He will make of Moses “a nation greater and mightier than they [Israel]” (Num 14:12; Ex 32:10). On both occasions Moses implored God not to destroy Israel and make of him a great nation. Both times God deferred His wrath; nevertheless, His intention to make of Moses a mighty nation stood/stands unaltered for three and a half millennia, for Jesus said, “But if you do not believe his [Moses’] writings, how will you believe my words” (John 5:47). Thus, to hear Jesus’ words and to believe the One who sent Him and thereby pass from death to life (v. 24) is to believe Moses’ writings; for Moses is the house that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matt 22:32) built (Heb 3:3–4) when He led Israel through the wilderness of Sin/Zin.

It should not be overlooked that Moses is a house within a house: Moses is a house whose builder is Christ Jesus, who is worthy of more honor than the house as the Father is worthy of more honor than the Son.

The *Theos* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος] who, in the beginning, was with God [*Theon*—τὸν θεόν] and who was God [*Theos*—θεός] (John 1:1–2). 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, the previously Unknown God, when the divine breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] descended upon Him as a dove (Matt 3:16–17) and gave the man Jesus a second birth. And this only Son of *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος] came 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 (Matt 3:15).

Some Sabbatarian disciples feel a need to call the Father by a name other than “the Father,” but He was the Unknown God of the Old Testament. He had no uttered name. Even His existence was concealed within the Tetragrammaton *YHWH*. Therefore, neither ancient Israel nor the world knew the Father (John 17:25), whom Jesus has now revealed to the firstfruits. Nor did Israel recognize Jesus, whom the world doesn’t yet know, when He came to His own.

- Christ Jesus is the beginning and the end (Rev 22:13) of all things;
- He was concealed by the creation (Eccl 3:11) from Israel;
- He is now concealed from both Israel and the world by the teachings of false apostles, disguised as servants of righteousness (2 Cor 11:13–5).

When Israelites uttered *Adonai* instead of attempting to pronounce the Tetragrammaton *YHWH*, a practice which Jesus also observed, the Father was concealed by the singularity of the linguistic icon, *Lord*. He was nowhere to be seen in the Old Testament, except in Daniel chapter 7 where He appears as the *Ancient of days*. Yet He was always present, figuratively looking over the shoulder of *Yah*, who created all things. After all, it is His creation, not the creation of physical things, that is described in Genesis chapter 1 — and His creation is of spiritual things, beginning with the last Adam who was the light of this world (2 Cor 4:6 *et al*), the light of Day One. Disciples of Christ Jesus are, today, of the last Adam, Christ Jesus, as the first Eve was of the first Adam; disciples today constitute the last Eve, the Zion who gives birth before experiencing labor pains. Once liberated from indwelling sin and death, disciples will have undergone an instantaneous change analogous to childbirth: they will then be as Cain and Abel were, nations brought forth in a day (Isa 66:7–8). But the birth order will be reversed, with righteous Abel born at the second Passover and with Cain born 220 days later when the great falling away occurs (2 Thess 2:3). And as the first Cain slew his brother, the last Cain will also slay or attempt to slay his brother, righteous disciples who keep the commandments by faith.

But none of the above can be understood or accepted by human beings prior to the Father having raised the person from the dead—all of humankind is spiritually dead until the Father raises a person from the dead by drawing the person from this world (John 6:44, 65), one at a time, to be His firstborn sons (Rom 8:29). Even though a person is physically alive, until the person receives a second life, a spiritual life, through receipt of the divine breath of the Father as Jesus received this divine breath [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] when it lit upon Him in the visible form of a dove (Matt 3:16), the person is spiritually dead. Only when born of spirit as a son of God can a person know the Father. Until then, the person will misidentify the Son as the Father, usually through one of two persistent heresies: the person will claim that the Father and the Son are one in number,

not in unity (this is the heresy of Trinitarian Christendom); or the person will identify the Father as the God of the Old Testament, thereby making Christ Jesus a created being either like other men (the heresy of Arian Christendom) or a created being like the archangels Michael and Lucifer (the heresy of the Mormons). Regardless, though, of what heresy a disciple embraces, the disciple condemns him or herself through attempting to enter into God's rest on the following day as Israel in the wilderness of Paran tried to do (Num chap 14), or condemns him or herself by denying Christ through denying the divinity of *the Logos* in the beginning.

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. Unless a person has been drawn from this world by the Father, drawn to produce fruit before it is the season for fruit, the Father remains the Unknown God whom "Christians" and non-Christians worship in ignorance as Greeks in Paul's day worshipped an unknown god in superstition and ignorance.

Jesus said, "And this is eternal life, that they know you [the Father] the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (17:3) ... the person who does not know the Father and the Son does not have eternal life. Salvation is just that simple.

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); "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). These 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" (Gen 17:1). *Elohim*, now, is the regular plural [the "im" or "mem" 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 has seen the Father or *Theon* (John 1:18) at any time. And what the creation or eternity [Heb: *olam*] has concealed (Eccl 3:11) is that in the beginning was a marriage that ended with the death of ὁ λῶγος, the Helpmate to τὸν θεόν, 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 ὁ λῶγος. The narrative of Scripture begins with marriage and ends with marriage. And the basis for this narrative is found in the Law of Moses.

Circumcision comes from Genesis chapter 17: "When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord [*YHWH*] appeared to Abram and said to him, 'I am God Almighty [*El Shaddai*]; walk before me, and be blameless, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly'" (vv. 1–2). Circumcision was the sign of this covenant (vv. 10–14), its ratification confirmed in the droplets of blood coming when the foreskin is cut away. It is a covenant made in the flesh (v. 13) and with the flesh. Its terms call for the circumcised person to walk blamelessly before God, meaning that circumcision causes the man to appear before God covered only by his obedience to God ... obedience functions as a spiritual garment that conceals a man's nakedness as the

foreskin of the penis physically concealed the head of his penis and hence, his nakedness.

Sometimes Scripture is not for the prudish: a man is represented by his penis as a woman is represented by her flesh. A woman is covered by what she wears on her head (physically she has no other head to cover); therefore, her head-covering becomes a symbolic representation of being under authority ... this symbolism hasn't changed in the past two millennia. A man, however, is covered by his foreskin, with the presence of his foreskin disclosing that the man is under the authority of the prince of this world whereas the absence of the foreskin leaves a man naked and covered by his obedience to God. This circumcised man is no longer in subjection to the prince of this world and is therefore fully responsible for his own sins or lawlessness. And this is an important distinction that Muslims need to understand, for as circumcised descendants of Ishmael, Esau, and the sons of Keturah, they are left, because of their circumcision, with no covering before God except their obedience to the commandments, which they all know whether they admit to knowing them or not. This means that their transgression of the Sabbath commandment effectively prevents them from entering into God's (*Allah's*) presence—and their pride, manifested in their refusal to acknowledge the Sabbath, is what spiritually hinders them from coming before God when the promise of entering into His rest stands (Heb 4:1).

Jesus' death at Calvary negates the need to be physically circumcised, for His death pays the penalty for every sin committed in this world. But professing that Jesus is Lord and by believing that the Father raised Him from the dead, the record of debt that stood against each person (the record for which the Adversary was responsible before the person came under the law — Rom 5:13) is canceled at Calvary for those who are of Israel, a nation now circumcised of heart. Nakedness now pertains to the inner man or self. So for disciples born of spirit, the flesh has no more importance than the body of the whale (great fish) had for Jonah. There is no need to circumcise the flesh, for the flesh will not and cannot enter heaven. The flesh only has importance to the person who has not been born of spirit; i.e., the flesh is only important to the dead. And a person can gauge whether he or she has been born of spirit by the importance the person places on the flesh, upon biological lineage, upon skin color—if these things retain importance, most likely spiritual birth has not occurred.

The juxtaposition of a physical foreskin covering the nakedness of a man forming the chiral image of to a spiritual covering of obedience concealing spiritual nakedness has been poorly understood by all of Israel. It is difficult to conceive of obedience as a garment that is put on to cover one's nakedness. It is even more difficult to accept that personal obedience is analogous to a woman's head-covering—

- A disciple puts on Christ Jesus' righteousness or obedience when the person professes that Jesus is Lord;
- This garment of Christ expressed in Christian terminology as "grace" covers the spiritual nakedness of every person circumcised of heart.
- The disciple covered by *grace* is to Christ Jesus as a wife is to her husband (1 Cor 11:3).
- As a wife outwardly covered/covers her head for the sake of the angels, the disciple covers his or her head with personal obedience for the sake of the angels (1 Cor 11:10).

- It is not the disciple who is born of spirit first but the Son, which is why the disciple ought to have a symbol of authority on this son of God's head, with this symbol being personal obedience (1 Cor 11:8–9).

What Paul wrote to the saints at Corinth has not been well understood, for Paul wrote, “Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as if her head were shaven” (1 Cor 11:4–5), from the perspective of detailing that which is spiritual milk (1 Cor 3:1–3) or the shadow of an endtime spiritual reality. Paul commended the saints at Corinth because they remembered him “in everything and maintain the traditions even as [he] delivered them” (1 Cor 11:2), with the notable exception of how they were observing the Passover (v. 17). Thus, the understanding is that a wife covering her head and hair in the period when the Church is represented by the patriarch Isaac (i.e., between Calvary and the second Passover) is directly analogous to a empowered disciple covering him or herself with personal obedience during the seven endtime years of tribulation ... not covering oneself with obedience once liberated from indwelling sin and death will be unforgivable blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Thus, for either a man or his wife to pray or prophesy without being circumcised of heart is blasphemy.

Does a man not praying with his head covered pertain now to physical circumcision (1 Cor 11:4)? It does not! Physical circumcision does not return to importance until Christ Jesus no longer covers disciples with His righteousness and until after Israel has metaphorically crossed the Jordan to enter into God's rest. Thus, physical circumcision doesn't return to importance until the Millennium begins; for every person who is of God will cover him or herself with personal obedience throughout the Tribulation. No other covering will be necessary.

Now, the unresolved issue: does a man's foreskin or a man's hat equate to his wife head-covering in this so-called Christian era?

Sin entered the world through the first Adam, and death reigned over all men from Adam to Moses (Rom 5:12–14); so it was the giving of the law that ended death's reign over all men, for the law made known what sin and by extension death was. And Israel under the law required animal sacrifices to cover the transgressions of the nation, with these animal sacrifices a shadow and type of Christ Jesus' sacrifice at Calvary. Therefore, working backwards, from Moses to Calvary, Israel's disobedience was covered by animal sacrifices. From Joseph to Moses, Israel's transgressions were covered by Israel being a slave people to Pharaoh and thus not free to keep the commandments. From Abraham to Joseph, Israel had no covering for its transgressions except its faith, in that the patriarchs believed God and their belief was counted to them (in particular, to Abraham — Gen 15:6) as righteousness. From Noah to Abram, humankind's transgressions of the commandments were covered by all of humankind being consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32) and as such, consigned to being bondservants of the Adversary.

While sons of disobedience (i.e., before being drawn from this world by the Father), every disciple was as humankind was between Noah and Abram. No sin was counted against the person (who also had no spiritual life) because the person as a descendant of the first Adam was the lawful bondservant of the Adversary ... Americans and Western Europeans are vehemently opposed to slavery; yet every person is a lawful bondservant of Satan the devil until the person is drawn from this world and born of spirit as a son of God. Christ Jesus paid the ransom price for the liberation of that which animates the

flesh, not for the flesh itself; hence sin and death continues to dwell in the fleshly members of disciples (Rom 7:21–25), a mystery Paul said he didn't understand (v. 15). If sin and death did not still dwell in the flesh, disciples would not die physically but would live until Christ returns when they would be transformed in the twinkling of an eye. The death of the saints is “proof” that sin and death continues to dwell in the fleshly members of disciples, and “proof” that disciples are in need of liberation at a second Passover.

Because disciples are spiritually as Isaac was physically, what the Lord told Isaac pertains to disciples:

Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines. And the Lord appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land of which I shall tell you. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. (Gen 26:1–5)

Egypt represents sin, and Isaac is not to enter into sin. Christ Jesus is the reality Abraham foreshadowed, and Isaac (now the Church) will receive the promises and blessing made to Abraham (Christ Jesus) not because of his righteousness but because of Abraham's—and these promises and blessing will go to Isaac's seed (Gen 26:4). Thus, Isaac becomes a conduit through which the promises and blessings made to Abraham are passed to Esau and Jacob, with the Lord hating Esau while he was still in the womb. The Church is a conduit through which the promises and blessing of Christ Jesus are delivered to endtime saints during the Tribulation, with some of these saints hated by God even before the seven endtime years of tribulation begin. They are hated because they do not value their birthright enough to strive for it. They are lawless, covered by their own hairy coat of self-righteousness, and they like being lawless and self-righteous.

Isaac was physically circumcised, but he was covered by Abraham's obedience and faith. The Church is physically uncircumcised but spiritually circumcised, and it is covered by Christ Jesus' righteousness. The Church's physical circumcision or uncircumcision is without meaning, since Christ Jesus abolished the offense of outward circumcision that had divided the world into two peoples (Eph 2:14–15). Therefore, a man is no long either covered by his lack of circumcision, or made naked by his circumcision. Yet a wife who prays or prophesies with her head and hair uncovered dishonors her head ... Paul wrote that a woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered is the same as a woman praying or prophesying with her head shaven; so a woman's hair is only a type of her head-covering and not the head-covering itself, as a man's hair length is a type of a man covering or not covering his head. Hence, for the sake of angels, a woman is to cover her head with both hair and a head-covering and a man, when praying or prophesying, is not to cover his head with long hair and a hat, the two coverings reflective of the double spiritual covering of Christ Jesus' righteousness and the disciple's personal obedience.

II.

It is difficult to perceive that Christ's righteousness functions as a garment that disciples put on daily as physically circumcised Israel covered its transgressions of the law through the "daily" or daily sacrifice. But grace when properly understood is the garment of Christ's righteousness that covers the daily sins of disciples; for all who are "baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal 3:27). And what those believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees never understood is that the garment of Christ—literally, grace—covers the transgressions of the new creature born of spirit, with this new creature being neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, free nor bond (v. 28). All of these physical attributes pertain to the flesh: a man has outdoor plumbing while a woman has indoor. An Ethiopian has a darker tent of flesh than has someone of Nordic heritage. But grace does not cover the lawlessness of the flesh, which today remains in subjection to sin and death. Rather, grace covers the transgressions of the new creature, a son of God born of spirit and domiciled in an outer nature (2 Cor 4:16) or tent that is the son of God's earthly home (2 Cor 5:1). And it is this son of God over whom sin has no dominion (Rom 6:14), for this son's Father is not the first Adam who lost his covering of obedience when he ate forbidden fruit. Rather, this son's Father is τὸν θεόν, the Most High God, but also the Unknown God.

The tent of flesh into which a son of God is born was before birth-from-above a son of disobedience (Eph 2:2–3), consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32) and not free to keep the law of God (Rom 8:7). Being born again or born of spirit sets the mind and heart free from disobedience, but until the tent of flesh is liberated from the indwelling law of sin and death, the mind and the heart which "delight in the law of God" (Rom 7:22) are at war with the law of sin that dwells in the flesh ... the new creature is light in a jar of clay, and the jar will not enter heaven for it is of this world that is passing away (1 John 2:17). It, too, will pass away before the coming of the new heavens and new earth.

Words are linguistic icons that are either visibly inscribed or orally heard ... 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*—πνεῦμα, 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 Πνεῦμα Ἅγιον or πνεῦμα ἅγιον, written in Roman characters as *Pneuma 'Agion* or *pneuma hagion*, is usually translated as the "Holy Spirit" and assigned personhood, which is like assigning personhood to one's own breath. The phrase would be better translated as *breath holy* or *wind holy*. This *breath* or *wind* is that of *the Logos* in Psalm 51:11, and in Psalm 104:30a, a reality poorly understood even by Sabbatarian disciples. But in the New Testament, when Πνεῦμα Ἅγιος is seen the phrase usually refers to the breath of the Father, for the breath of Christ appears in the phrase Πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ, usually 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 Πνεῦμα τοῦ ἐγείραντος Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν, usually translated as the "Spirit of the (One) raising Jesus from (the) dead" (Rom 8:11). So the Apostle Paul writes of two spirits or breaths, one that belongs to Jesus (v. 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 separates the spirit of Christ from the spirit of the Father, which is the spirit by which the Father raises the dead (again, John 5:21). So for Paul, the Holy Spirit [*Pneuma 'Agion*] does not have personhood but is a force in the heavenly realm that equates to physical breath or wind in this physical realm.

To every word in whatever language, meaning must be assigned to the word by the auditor [the one hearing the oral icon or reading the inscribed icon], and this meaning will be assigned by a community or a collective of hearers and readers. Concerning Scripture, this community is all those who hear the voice of Jesus (John 10:3–5). It is not the world; nor is it those who are hostile to God ... the Apostle Paul gives only one “test” to determine whether a person has truly been born of spirit: “For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom 8:7–8). Thus, those human beings who do not have the spirit of Christ and the spirit of the Father dwelling in them (who have not been born of spirit) have their minds set on the flesh and do not submit to God’s law. So the person who claims to be born of spirit but who cannot submit to God’s law is a liar and a member of the synagogue of Satan, for the person remains a son of disobedience and remains in bondage to disobedience. Sin still has dominion over this person, whereas sin has no dominion over those who have been born of spirit (Rom 6:14).

The person who actually has been born of Spirit and who does not submit to God’s law is a hypocrite. This person knows to keep the law of God and is thereby condemned by Moses (John 5:45–47; Deut 31:26). This person’s righteousness does not exceed that of the scribes and the Pharisees, and this person will never enter heaven (Matt 5:20).

According to Jesus, to be “great” in the kingdom of heaven a person will keep the commandments and teach others to do likewise; for whoever relaxes one of the least of the commandments that Jesus fulfilled and who teaches others to likewise relax the least of the commandments will be called least in the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:19). And the person who teaches Israel to break the commandments, regardless of the mighty works the person has done in the name of Jesus, will be denied when judgments are revealed, and will be cast into condemnation (Matt 7:21–23). So the person who teaches others will teach one of three positions: either (1) keep the commandments and so teach others, or (2) relax the commandments and so teach others, or the person will (3) teach against the law [*ἀνομίαν*]. In the first case, Jesus says the person will be great. In the second case, Jesus said the person will be called least in the kingdom. And in the third case, Jesus said the person will not be in the kingdom. Therefore, men who say that Christians are not to keep the law have already been condemned by Jesus. Their arguments, such as *dispensationalism* [that the law is only for physical Jews and that after Calvary Christians are not under the law but under grace], are the millstones by which they have condemned themselves. For the law that was written on two stone tables is the same law that is now written on two tablets of flesh, the heart and the mind of the person who has been born of Spirit and who has made a journey of faith to cleanse the heart—what happened at Calvary was the ending of a covenant made in the flesh and with flesh (a covenant that was a shadow of a heavenly covenant), and implementation of the heavenly covenant that is the shadow’s spiritual reality.

To understand what happened at Calvary, an Israelite born of spirit [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] and circumcised of heart by spirit [by the divine breath of Christ] must first understand the house that is Moses is built on Christ (Heb 3:3–4) ... Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses who initially mediated the covenant to which better promises have been added (better promises are not added to a covenant that has been abolished, nor does the mediator change for an abolished covenant). The writer of Hebrews said of Jesus, “Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek” (Heb 5:8–9). Moses did not lead all of humankind out of Egypt; he led Israel out from physical bondage to a physical king [Pharaoh], but he did not lead Israel into the Promised Land. Rather, he led Israel to the plains of Moab where life and death were placed before Israel; he led Israel to where life could be chosen by the children of the nation that left Egypt.

Jesus is not the source of salvation for those who will not obey him; those human beings who will not obey Him have no salvation available to them. Thus, Jesus is the source of salvation for those who hear His words and believe the One who sent Him (John 5:24). And the person who obeys Him will keep the commandments and teach others to do the same (Matt 5:19). But this person is a son of God, for those who have not been born of Spirit cannot keep the commandments (Rom 8:7). So to understand the house that is Moses, a person needs to realize that Moses pertains to the flesh made naked by circumcision, or to the fleshy tent in which the born of spirit son of God dwells. Moses rules the hand and the body, whereas Jesus is the high priest of the new inner creature. And Calvary saw construction of the bridge that in the fulfillment of all righteousness permitted God the Father to raise from the dead that which never before had spiritual life unlike Jesus, who entered His creation (John 1:3) as His Son, His only (John 3:16). Israel goes from being a physically circumcised nation to being a spiritually circumcised nation.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “In him [Christ Jesus] also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh, by the circumcision of Christ” (Col 2:11) ... the circumcision of Moses is the circumcision of the flesh, the cutting away of foreskins, but the circumcision of Christ is circumcision of the heart by Spirit, not by the letter of the law (Rom 2:29). This circumcision is from God. And the juxtaposition of hand to heart is also that of the first Adam, a man of mud, to the last Adam, a life-giving spirit (1 Cor 15:45).

III.

The Law of Moses covers not just the covenants Moses mediated between God and Israel, but covenants between God and Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, some ratified by the shedding of blood, some by better sacrifices. The Law of Moses serves as a house that covers or shelters the flesh in a manner that foreshadows the mantle of Christ Jesus’ righteousness.

Jesus said, “If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man’s whole body well?” (John 7:23). So Jesus used the linguistic phrase Law of Moses as a covering that included circumcision, a “cutting” that made a portion of the body well, with the importance of this cutting exceeding the importance of ceasing work on the Sabbath. The command to circumcise precedes the giving of the Decalogue [the ten living words

of God] as does the giving of the Passover covenant made on the day when God took Israel by the hand to lead the nation out of bondage to Pharaoh. And if circumcision has preeminence over the Sabbath, then it reasonably follows that the Passover covenant also has preeminence over the Sinai covenant, an issue to be addressed later.

The prophet Jeremiah wrote,

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquities, and I will remember their sin no more. (31:31–34)

When all "know the Lord" the least of Israel is not the physically or materially poor of Judea, but those who relax the least of the commandments, while the greatest of Israel is the one who keeps the commandments and teaches others to do likewise ... when this new covenant was promised to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, this new covenant is only made with the house of Israel. There will no longer be two physical houses, but one spiritual house composed of all who have circumcised hearts; for this new covenant is not a covenant like that made with the fathers of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah on the day when the Lord led their fathers out of Egypt. And if it is not a covenant like the one made on the day when Israel left Egypt, it does not begin and end with the shedding of blood—and this is an important concept to remember, for the shedding of Jesus' blood at Calvary does not begin or ratify this new covenant, but the Passover requirement of the Moab covenant (Deut 16:1).

Note: two Passover covenants exist, one made with Israel when the nation was enslaved in Egypt, with this covenant addressed in Exodus chapters 12 and 13. And it is this Passover covenant that will be replaced by the "new covenant" described in Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Hebrews 8:8–12 ... on the day when the Lord [YHWH] took the fathers of the house of Israel and the house of Judah by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, the Lord said nothing to them about the Sabbath, about murder, about adultery, about lying, about stealing, about idols or coveting. What He said was, "This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to [the size of] their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household" (Ex 12:2–3). The lamb was to be penned until the 14th day then slain between the evenings (v. 6). Blood of this Passover lamb was to be put on the doorposts and lintels of the houses, and the lamb was to be roasted whole with fire and eaten with bitter herbs (vv. 7–9). It was to be eaten with belts fastened, feet shod, and staffs in hand; it was to be eaten in haste (v. 11). The blood would be the sign that the Lord would pass over the houses of the fathers of Israel and Judah, and that no plague would destroy them when He struck the land of Egypt, slaying firstborns of both man and beast (vv. 12–13).

Moses had commanded Israel, “None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning” (Ex 12:22); yet on the same night that God struck down the firstborns of Egypt, Pharaoh rose up in the night and summoned Moses and Aaron and said, “Up, go out from among my people, both you and the people of Israel and go, serve the Lord, as you have said. Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone, and bless me also” (Ex 12:29–32).

Israel cannot both remain in their houses until morning and leave Egypt during the dark portion of the same night; so on what night did God strike down the firstborns of Egypt? The answer is, on the dark portion of the 14th of Abib, the night on which Jesus was betrayed. The death angel passed over Egypt on only one night, the 14th. Israel left Egypt with a high hand on the dark portion of the 15th day of the first month.

Yet under the second Passover covenant, the Passover instituted by the Moab covenant, Israel is to keep the Passover on the night that Israel left Egypt ... there is no mistake in Scripture. Instead, there are two Passover covenants; thus Passover should be observed on two nights every year, the dark portion of the 14th and the dark portion of the 15th. But Jesus is not crucified twice. Disciples are not to take the sacraments of bread and wine twice a year. Rather, disciples take the sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed, the dark portion of the 14th. Only on this one night each year do bread and wine represent the body and blood of the Lamb of God; on every other night bread and wine are the fruit of the ground, Cain’s offering. Bread and wine are Cain’s offering if these sacraments are taken on the dark portion of the 15th of Abib, or even taken during the daylight portion of the 14th. So eating the Passover sacraments on the dark portion of the 14th is of great importance.

Traditionally, the Churches of God have taught that celebration of the Passover on the night that Jesus was betrayed originated with Jesus, but Jesus’ disciples did not object to when Jesus would eat the His last Passover meal, and the man whose house they used apparently wasn’t surprised by when the disciples prepared for the Passover meal (Matt 26:17–19). However, this day was one day before when the Pharisees would slaughter Passover lambs that they would eat on the dark portion of the 15th day, the High Sabbath.

John’s gospel clearly states that Jesus was slain on the Preparation Day for the great Sabbath of the Sabbath, with this Preparation day being the 14th of Abib. So understanding has been lacking in how to read Matthew’s and Luke’s gospels.

Luke writes, “Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, ‘Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it’” (22:7–8). This day when Jesus sent Peter and John forth to prepare a place would have been the 13th of Abib.

Secular sources, most of whom deny that Jesus was three days and three nights in the grave as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, the only sign Jesus gave of His divinity, have lambs only being slaughtered after the evening sacrifice on the 14th, which would make Jesus’ crucifixion the reality of all Passover lambs previously sacrificed, a reasonable supposition considering that the lambs were “a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ” (Col 2:17). But Luke is a very careful historian. And how to reconcile the two timelines [i.e., Matthew’s/Luke’s with John’s] has caused any number of problems among Sabbatarian disciples over the past few decades ... if Jesus is slain on the 14th, the Preparation Day as Pharisees kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread, then the day of Unleavened Bread on

which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed (the Preparation Day) that Luke references is one day earlier than the Preparation Day that John references.

Using the timeline from John, Jesus eats the Passover on the dark portion of the 14th of the first month, is taken captive and questioned by the religious leaders while it is still dark, then when day comes He is turned over to Pilate and crucified about noon, dies about 3:00 pm, and is taken from the cross and hastily buried at dusk as the 14th ends and the 15th begins. The 15th is the high Sabbath, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—and Jesus spends all of the 15th in the tomb. Likewise, He spends all of the 16th and the 17th, the weekly Sabbath, in the heart of the earth. Then He is resurrected in the dark portion of the 18th, and is gone from the tomb when Mary comes before daylight on the first day of the week. Therefore, the 14th is Wednesday, mid calendar week, and Jesus was resurrected on Sunday, the 18th, the midday of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a significant correspondence considering the reason for keeping the Sabbath under the Sinai covenant (Ex 20:11) as opposed to the reason for keeping the Sabbath under the Moab covenant (Deut 5:15). [Under the Sinai covenant, the Sabbath is kept as memorial to the physical creation, but under the Moab covenant, the Sabbath is kept as a remembrance of Israel’s liberation; thus, the Sabbath under the Sinai covenant points to the weekly time-cycle begun at creation whereas the Sabbath under the Moab covenant points to the Passover covenant and the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread, representing when Israel would live without sin.]

In John’s timeline, Jesus entered Jerusalem on the Sabbath, the 10th day of the first month (John 12:1, 12); He entered as both high priest and as Passover Lamb. And His confrontations with the Herodians, the Sadducees, and the Pharisees recorded in Matthew chapter 22 would have been on Monday, the 12th.

Again, Jesus did not die twice, and He did die midweek (too many prophecies have Him being cut off mid-week: in the middle of a seven year ministry as well as mid calendar week). Thus, reckoning Luke’s timeline with John’s, Luke calls the 13th *the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed*, which would then necessitate that the Passover would be eaten at the beginning of the 14th, during its dark portion, and not on the 15th, the high Sabbath under the second Sinai covenant (Lev 23:6–8).

In ancient Israel, two Passover lambs should have been sacrificed each year, one at the end of the 13th and one at the end of the 14th. And across time, a person can hear the reverberations of Emperor Constantine’s argument against Passover observation: Jesus is not slain twice. But by tradition, Judaism keeps the Passover on two successive days.

Although the easy way out of the problem of two Passover sacrifices is to shout, “Scribal error,” such clambering is not honest.

- The Passover covenant made with Israel on the night that the Lord lead the fathers of the nation out from Egypt begins with the death of Egyptian firstborns, so many that every house mourned.
- This Passover covenant was ratified by blood and will extend forward until blood is again shed under the terms of this covenant at even at the beginning of the 14th day of the month.
- Jesus’ shed blood at Calvary did not end this covenant, about which the writer of Hebrew says, years later, “In speaking of a new covenant, he [Jesus] makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready

to vanish away” (8:13) ... this first Passover covenant was still in effect, though old and becoming obsolete, three decades after Calvary.

- The Passover covenant the children of Israel on the plains of Moab was told to remember was ratified by Israel leaving Egypt with a high hand. This covenant was not ratified by blood but by the Exodus so this is not a temporary covenant but a heavenly thing (Heb 9:22–23).

The day on which Israel ate the Passover lamb was a memorial, kept as a feast to the Lord (Ex 12:14). For seven days Israel was to eat no leavened bread (v. 15), and the first day and seventh day of these seven days were to be holy assemblies and high Sabbaths when no work other than preparation of food for that day was to be done ... if these seven days begin at the end of the 14th, and if these seven days include all of the 21st, then these seven days are the same seven days given in Leviticus, with the first high day being the 15th and the last the 21st. This reading excludes the 14th, but includes the 21st even though the same language is used for both. So the passage could legitimately be read to include the 14th and exclude the 21st, especially in light of neither Jesus’ disciples nor the man whose house they used were surprised when Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover on the dark portion of the 14th. Thus, the entirety of the spring holy day season was considered “Sabbath,” not just the seven days of Unleavened Bread or the two high days at the end of these seven days.

Rabbinical Judaism’s practice of keeping the Passover on two nights has scriptural support apart from modern Judaism being unable to determine in advance the new crescent moon that begins the first month (the date of the new moon would have been known for two weeks before the Passover lamb was slain).

Clearly Jesus ate the Passover on the 14th, and the Apostle Paul commands the saints at Corinth to eat the Passover sacraments on the same night that Jesus was betrayed, the 14th (1 Cor 11:23–26). Jesus was also sacrificed at even (as the Pharisees determined when “even” was) between the 14th and the 15th. He was sacrificed as the Passover Lamb of God, a Lamb appropriate to size of the household of God, and He was sacrificed as the reality of every Passover lamb that had been sacrificed. He was resurrected as the reality of Israel’s exodus from bondage to sin. Jesus could not have both eaten the Passover and have been the Passover unless two observations of the Passover are required of Israel.

The second Passover liberation of Israel—the liberation of Israel from indwelling sin and death—ends the Passover covenant made with Israel on the night when the death angels pass over all the land. From that time forward, the Passover will only be observed on the dark portion of the 15th as a celebration commemorating Israel’s liberation from sin/Egypt.

The observation of the Passover on the dark portion of the 14th should be a somber occasion at which Jesus’ last night is remembered, but the observation of the Passover on the dark portion of the 15th should be a festive occasion, a feast celebrating liberation.

For far too long, the Church has not taken the Christian sacraments of bread and wine on the 14th of Abib as Paul commanded. Even today, a significant portion of Sabbatarian Christendom does not observe the Passover as commanded. And very few disciples understand that the Passover is a two night observance, the first to commemorate what happened in Egypt on the 14th of Abib, and second to commemorate what happened on the 15th, when Israel actually left Egypt.

IV.

This day [*YHWH's* Passover] shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord [*YHWH*]; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven out of your houses, for if anyone eats what is leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly, and on the seventh day a holy assembly. No work shall be done on those days. But what everyone needs to eat, that alone may be prepared by you. And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generation, as a statute forever. In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. For seven days no leaven is to be found in your houses. If anyone eats what is leavened, that person will be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a sojourner or a native of the land. You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwelling places you shall eat unleavened bread. (Ex 12:14–20)

Why the repetition? Isn't it enough to tell Israel not to eat leavened bread once? Israel is only told once that the first day and the last day shall be holy convocations. Why does God need to tell Israel two, three times not to eat leavened bread? And why does most of Christendom today, a nation that should be inwardly circumcised, eat leavened bread during these seven days?

God made a covenant with Israel on the day that He led this physically circumcised nation out of Egypt: for liberation from physical bondage to Pharaoh, Israel was to sacrifice a Passover lamb and to smear its blood on door posts and lintels, the entrances into Israel's houses. Then Israel was to commemorate this liberation by keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread, seven days during which Israel was not to eat any leavened bread or to have any leavened bread in its houses ... Moses tells the elders of Israel, "Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out of his house until the morning" (Ex 12:21–22). So the terms of this covenant do not ask of Israel to do anything but select and sacrifice a lamb, then with hyssop put some of the lamb's blood on their houses' doorposts and lintels and stay inside their houses until morning. This covenant says nothing about keeping the law of God or about being holy as God is holy; this covenant is about liberation from bondage and about all firstborns belonging to God for Him to do with as He pleases.

Moses further says to the elders of Israel, "You shall observe this rite as a statute forever. ... And when your children say to you, "What do you mean by this service?" you shall say, "It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses"" (Ex 12:24, 26–27). Thus, the Passover sacrifice of a lamb asks Israel to remember its liberation from bondage to Pharaoh when the death angel passed over the houses of Israel.

The two night observance of Passover is seen in the details of what Moses recorded, but it is as easily overlooked as it is seen.

The covenant God makes with Israel on the day that He leads the nation out of Egypt has two additional clauses: the people of Israel asked the Egyptians for silver, gold, and clothing, and thus plundered the Egyptians (Ex 12:35–36). Plus, as mentioned earlier, God claimed as His own all firstborns: “Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine” (Ex 13:2). Israel was to redeem its firstborn through either sacrifice or payment of a ransom price; however, Egypt is not offered a way to redeem its firstborns, which died when the death angel of the Lord passed over the houses of both Egypt and Israel. The lives of the firstborns of Egypt were given as the ransom price for Israel’s liberation (Isa 43:3). God exercised His claim to the lives of all firstborns when He slew Egyptian firstborns, both of man and beast.

Note what is not in the Passover covenant that God made with Israel on the day when He led the nation out of Egypt: there is no mention of His law, or of Israel being the holy nation of God, or of Israel being holy as He is holy. There is no mention of sacrifices other than the Passover lamb. There are no laws or statutes about how one Israelite is to treat another. There is nothing said about restitution or social justice or the Sabbath or the high Sabbaths, except for the two holy convocations that occur at the beginning and end of the seven days of Unleavened Bread. Thus, this Passover covenant is silent about most of those things that Christians attribute to the Law of Moses.

But this Passover covenant is not silent about leavening being found in the houses of Israel from the 14th day of the first month at even to the 21st day at even. It makes eating or having leavening in the houses of Israel during these seven days a great offense to God and a negation of the covenant by which He liberates Israel from bondage. The person who eats leavened bread during these seven days shall be cut off from Israel, and if cut off, then this person is as an Egyptian.

Typological exegesis holds that what is and can be known about God, including His invisible attributes [e.g., His eternal power and divine nature] has been clearly perceived through the visible things of this world (Rom 1:19–20), and further, that the physical things that can be seen and described precede invisible, spiritual things (1 Cor 15:46). Therefore, physical circumcision reveals and precedes spiritual circumcision—the circumcision made by hands and concealed by modest attire forms the copy and type [shadow] of the circumcision of the heart by spirit, and not by the letter of the law of Moses (Rom 2:28–29; Col 2:11). The circumcision given to the patriarch Abraham was for ratification of the covenant by which Abraham and his seed were to walk upright before God (Gen 17:1–2).

The circumcision given to Abraham was for the physically circumcised nation of Israel with whom God made the Passover covenant on the day that He led this nation out of bondage. But following Calvary, Israel ceases to be a physically or outwardly circumcised nation and becomes a spiritually or inwardly circumcised nation. Circumcision remains, but not circumcision of the flesh for the nation of Israel is no longer a nation defined by biological ancestry.

The marriage covenant made when God passed by Israel (Ezek 16:8; Ex 19:5–6) was initially made with physically circumcised Israel, but this nation [that became two nations] played the whore in Egypt (Ezek 23:3) and brought adultery into the marriage covenant. Thus, physically circumcised Israel was put away as a divorced woman, but the One who had married her was not free to marry again until death ended the

marriage—and here is where typological exegesis can be confused with isogesis, the bringing of meaning from outside sources into Scripture.

The Passover lamb is selected and penned on the 10th day of the first month, and Israel enters the Promised Land on the 10th day of the first month (Josh 4:19). Jesus and His first disciples enter Jerusalem on the 10th day of the first month (*cf.* John 19:31; 12:1, 12). So both the natural nation of Israel under Joshua, then a mixed nation of circumcised and uncircumcised Israelites (Josh 5:2–7), and the man Jesus of Nazareth are selected by God and penned in God’s rest, which was initially all of the Promised Land, but after Israel’s return from the Babylonian captivity was only the rebuilt temple. Both enter God’s rest on the 10th day of the first month. Both enter as the Passover Lamb of God that is to be sacrificed.

But what can be overlooked is that Joshua [in Greek, Ἰησοῦς or Jesus] led Israel into the Promised Land as Jesus led His disciples into the Jerusalem and the temple: as Joshua is a type of Jesus, the ancient nation of Israel is a type of Jesus’ disciples.

The natural nation of Israel, post Joshua’s leadership, played the harlot with sticks and stones in hilltop groves and became a blemished lamb that could not be sacrificed, but became the prey of wolves. Likewise, the disciples of Christ, post Jesus’ leadership, played the harlot with Greek paganism and became a blemished lamb that could not be sacrificed, but was delivered into the hand of the spiritual kingdom of Babylon. So in the type (ancient Israel) a new Israel was needed, one that would not play the harlot, one that was not consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32), one over whom sin had no dominion (Rom 6:14). This new Israel could not be a physical nation for a physical nation already existed; thus, this new Israel had to be a nation of a different type, a nation with whom a covenant could be made that was unlike the covenant God made with the fathers of Israel and Judah on the day when He took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt (Jer 31:32). This new Israel had to be a spiritual nation, which did not exist prior to the *Logos* entering His creation as His only Son, the man Jesus, the first man of circumcised Israel who covered His nakedness with obedience to God.

But what does all of the above say about the Church: a new Body of Christ was needed, one that would not play the harlot with Greek paganism, one that had no indwelling sin lingering in its fleshly members. This new Body of Christ could not be an assembly like the existing Christian Church for Christendom, like Judaism, will continue to exist as bondservants to the present prince of this world. This new Body has to be a spiritual assembly, an assembly that is not engaged in world politics nor focused on those things that occur in this world. So the Christendom that spiritually died as Jesus’ physical body died must be resurrected to life before Jesus returns as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Jesus’ disciples form the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27).

By His obedience, Jesus was made the Passover Lamb of God—and when a lamb is sacrificed, it isn’t only the head that is killed, but also the body. The Head of the Lamb of God cannot be sacrificed without the Body also being sacrificed, or crucified with Christ. And if crucified with Christ, then the flesh of disciples can be slain as was the fleshly body of the man Jesus; for the disciple is not above his teacher or the servant greater than his master (Matt 10:24). It is enough for disciples to be like Christ Jesus (*v.* 25), to walk as He walked (1 John 2:6), and to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God (Rom 12:1). And this becomes especially important when disciples are liberated from bondage to indwelling sin and death (Rom 7:21–25), for the number of

disciples who have been “slain for the word of God and for the witness they have borne” (Rev 6:9) is not yet complete (v. 11).

Israel does not cease to be when circumcision moves from being of the outer man to being of the inner man, born of Spirit as a son of God. This new creature is housed in a tabernacle or tent of flesh; so the following correspondences exist—

- Circumcision of the foreskin is physical and as such precedes and serves as the copy and type of circumcision of the heart.
- The physically circumcised Israelite in a house in Egypt precedes and serves as a copy and type of the spiritually circumcised Israelite [i.e., the new creature born of Spirit] in a tent of flesh.
- The two doorposts and lintel of the physically circumcised Israelite’s house in Egypt delineate the entryway into the house and as such correspond to the mouth of the tent of flesh in which the born of Spirit son of God dwells.
- Thus, the physically circumcised Israelite who, after smearing blood on doorposts and lintels, eats of a physical lamb roasted whole with fire serves as the copy and type of the spiritually circumcised Israelite who eats the flesh of the spiritual Lamb roasted over the fiery sins of Israel.
- For disciples, eating the unleavened bread that is or represents Christ’s body functions spiritually as eating the flesh of an actual lamb by a physically circumcised Israelite.

The covenant that ended at Calvary is the covenant[s] made with the flesh, beginning with Abraham who was to walk blamelessly before God. Born of Spirit disciples are to walk blamelessly before God (Rom 2:26; 3:31; 6:12–13 *et al*) as Abraham walked, keeping commandments and statutes and laws by faith (Gen 26:5). And it is faith that causes disciples to keep these commandments and laws in a rebellious world; it is this faith that will be counted to disciples as righteousness, not the keeping of the commandments, a distinction that will be lost on those individuals who have not truly been born of spirit.

Where typology comes close to being isogesis is in Egypt representing sin, a correspondence taught for centuries as a Christian truism ... when Jesus, during the eating of His last physical Passover, took the cup and after giving thanks over it, says, “Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt 26:27–28), He made the wine the equivalent of His blood—and His blood the equivalent of the blood of the Passover lamb. He also made forgiveness of sins the equivalent of leaving Egypt. So the long held correspondence of Egypt representing sin is confirmed when the Passover covenant made with the flesh of physically circumcised Israelites moves inward to become the Passover covenant made with the spiritually circumcised new creature, a son of God.

The validity of typological exegesis is now strengthened when returning to Exodus: “None of you shall go out the door of his house until the morning” (12:22) ... the house of a spiritually circumcised Israelite is the tent of flesh in which this son of God dwells. As no physically circumcised Israelite was to leave his house until the morning, no spiritually circumcised Israelite will leave his house [again, the tent of flesh] until the “light” returns, meaning until Christ Jesus returns and the judgment of saints is revealed (1 Cor 4:5). The “darkness” of the night the Passover Lamb of God is slain has not yet ended, and will not end until the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and His Christ.

Disciples do not consciously go to heaven upon death, but dwell as sleeping spirits under the altar of God (Rev 6:11) until the end of this age.

Of great importance prophetically is realization that darkness (i.e., the long spiritual night that began at Calvary) does not end until the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Ancient of Days and of His Christ (Rev 11:15; Dan 7:9–14), repeated for emphasis. This means that the first half of the seven endtime years of tribulation represent the dark hours between midnight and dawn, when Israel begins to loot the Egyptians. The reality of Pharaoh telling Moses and Aaron to take the people of Israel and go and serve the Lord occurs shortly before the end of the first half of the Tribulation—and the two witnesses are as Moses and Aaron were.

The Passover covenant is not one covenant that ends when covenants made with the flesh are abolished. The Apostle Paul writes,

Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants [note the plural] of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. (Eph 2:11–16)

The covenants of promise are not abolished when the hostility created by physical circumcision dies on the cross. Rather, what had been two peoples, one physically circumcised, one uncircumcised, are now the same as far as God is concerned. Both “have access in one Spirit to the Father” (Eph 2:18). Both are uncircumcised of heart until both make a journey of faith that is spiritually equivalent to the patriarch Abraham’s physical journey made by faith from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran, then on to the Promised Land (Rom 4:9–12).

The 1st-Century Greek who turned to God separated himself or herself from his or her neighbors, but this Greek would not have turned to God unless the Father had first drawn the person from this world ... unless the Lord had called Abram out from the land of Haran, a land representing death, Abram would never have left his father. Likewise, unless the Father draws and the Son calls a person out from this world by giving to the person a second breath of life, the person would never leave this world and all that it offers. So the 1st-Century Greek who ceased worshiping a pantheon of deities that sprang from the heads of ancient peoples as Athena sprang from Zeus’ forehead or mind—this Greek began a spiritual journey in the same way that Abraham began a physical journey when he set out with his father Terah from Ur to go into the land of Canaan. This Greek’s journey called for him or her “to abstain from things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood” (Acts 15:19–20). Everything else this Greek would need to know could be learned from hearing Moses read every Sabbath (v. 21).

The Jew who kept the commandments as a cultural expectation and who broke with his or her culture by professing with his or her mouth that Jesus is Lord and believing in

his or heart that God had raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 10:9) would have made a journey of faith of equivalent distance to that of the Greek's, for to confess that Jesus is Lord requires perceiving God as a house of two who are one in unity but not numerically.

Without undertaking a journey of faith equivalent to Abraham's journey while still uncircumcised, no heart is cleansed. The heart cannot be circumcised. The person born of spirit will be as a Hebrew infant of less than eight days of age, and will remain as a new born infant until the heart is cleansed by faith; for with God, maturity is not obtained by the passage of time but by the journey of faith from spiritual Babylon to the heavenly city of Jerusalem. Circumcision comes when the person spiritually follows Jesus and crosses the River Jordan and begins living as a spiritual Judean, thereby taking the Passover sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed.

The Law of Moses is not one covenant, but rather, all of the covenants of promise that were made with the flesh. It includes the Passover covenant (Ex chap 12–13), the Sinai covenant (Ex chaps 20–24), the second Sinai covenant (Ex chap 34), the covenant between God and the men of Levi (Ex 32:25–29), the added laws concerning offerings (the Book of Leviticus), and the Moab covenant (Deut chaps 29–32). All of these covenants of promise are continued as covenants of promise made with born of spirit sons of God—and this is what greater Christendom has failed to understand. Disciples take the sacraments of bread and wine on the night that Jesus was betrayed (1 Cor 11:23–26) as the continuation of the Passover covenant made with Israel on the night that God took Israel by the hand to lead this nation out of Egypt.

It is convenient to use the theological shorthand of saying that the covenants of promise made with the flesh were “abolished” rather than “continued on at a higher plain.” Yes, they were abolished, for all covenants made with the flesh were abolished at Calvary. But “Israel” was not abolished! And if Israel is not abolished but becomes a nation with circumcised hearts, then the covenants are not abolished either but become covenants made with this spiritual nation that used to be two peoples, divided by the hostility created through physical circumcision. And Jesus' actions on the night that He was betrayed, when compared to what happened at the first Passover, disclose the relationship between the physical and the spiritual ... the plundering of Egypt, now, becomes an interesting case study: when Israel took the gold and silver of Egypt, it took those things that “reflected light” as the moon reflects the light of the sun. Jesus is the light of this world (John 1:4, 7; 12:35–36; 1 John 1:5 *et al*), and when He died at Calvary, darkness overcame this world. It is physical things that reflect visible light; the true light of this world is invisible and spiritual. And Jesus was the true light of God. So as Egypt lost those things that reflected light, the world lost its light and was plunged into darkness when Christ died on the cross.

The chiral image of Israel plundering the Egyptians will be disciples returning those things that reflect light during the second half of the Tribulation.

A word needs to be said about covenants: a “covenant” (Heb: *bereeth*) or a “compact” or a “law” in its broad sense is a formal declaration of contractual terms that begins with the shedding of blood or a cutting and extends until blood is again shed or a cutting is again made. Hence a covenant is the space or distance from cutting to cutting. A marriage covenant was to extend from when the hymen of a virgin is broken by her husband and blood is shed in the marriage bed until blood is again shed at death (for the

hymen could not be restored). Thus, a covenant made in the flesh cannot be spiritual for death ends a covenant ratified by blood.

- Since death ends every covenant or “will” (Gr: *diatheke*) made in the flesh, the Law of Moses was abolished at Calvary.
- However, the covenants of promise were not dependent upon the flesh, but upon the will of God.
- Isaac was not born through the strength of Abraham and Sarah’s flesh, but by promise, and Isaac was not covered by his righteousness, but by Abraham’s obedience extended by promise.
- Jesus was not resurrected from the dead through the strength of His flesh, but by the will of God, and disciples are not covered by their righteousness but by Jesus’ obedience extended by promise.
- Moses remains the witness against every Israelite (John 5:45; Deut 31:26) regardless of whether physically or spiritually circumcised. And the covenants of promise remain in force.

The writer of Hebrews said, “Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. Thus, it was necessary for copies of heavenly things to be purified with these rites [i.e., the shedding of blood], but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these” (Heb 9:22–23 — read vv. 15–28).

The covenant the Lord made with the fathers of Israel and Judah on the day when He took their fathers by the hand to lead them out of Egypt began with the shedding of blood by Passover lambs and was confirmed by the death of Egyptian firstborns as the ransom price for Israel’s liberation (Isa 43:3). This covenant continues forward, now, until it ends when blood is again shed (v. 4). And it is this second shedding of blood that will make Israel forget its liberation from bondage to Pharaoh (Jer 16:14–15; 23:7–8).

The annual shedding of the blood by Passover lambs was a memorial of the inauguration of the Passover covenant by which physical liberation occurred from physical bondage to Pharaoh. However, when a lamb is no longer sacrificed but a disciple drinks from the cup on the night that Jesus was betrayed, the memorial ceases being a remembrance of liberation from physical bondage and becomes anticipation of liberation from spiritual bondage to sin and death. Everything moves upward one step on a spiritual hierarchy—

- When Israel in Egypt sacrificed Passover lambs on the 14th of Abib, the nation was not then free but anticipated freedom before the night was over.
- When Israel in Jerusalem sacrificed Passover lambs on the 15th of Abib, the nation celebrated a memorial to the nation’s liberation (Ex 12:14) that was to be kept as a feast throughout the generations.
- When disciples now drink from the cup on the 14th of Abib, this spiritually circumcised nation of Israel is not free from bondage to indwelling sin and death, but anticipates freedom before this spiritual night is over.
- When disciples feast on the 15th of Abib, the nation celebrates a memorial to ancient Israel’s liberation from bondage to Pharaoh and celebrates in anticipation of humankind’s liberation from disobedience and corruption.

The spiritually circumcised Israelite who eats the bread and drinks of the cup on the night that Jesus was betrayed becomes the spiritual equivalent of the physically

circumcised Israelite in Egypt who smeared blood on doorposts and lintel and ate the flesh of the paschal lamb in haste.

- The person who claims to be born of Spirit but who has not been (but who lies) becomes the spiritual equivalent to Egyptians on the night when the death angel passed through Egypt.
- The person who has no interest in God becomes the spiritual equivalent to the livestock of Egyptians on that fateful night.
- All firstborns who do not cover themselves with the blood of Christ will be slain when the lives of men are again given as ransom for the liberation of Israel.

This second slaying of firstborns will end the Passover covenant that began when God took Israel by the hand to lead the nation out of Egypt. The exodus from Egypt will no longer be remembered, for the covenant will no longer be one of promise—the promise will be fulfilled in the recovery of Israel from the north country and out of all the countries where God has driven these peoples (Jer. 16:15), with the north country representing death.

As a contractual term of the Passover covenant, all firstborns of man and beast [i.e., what is first to open a womb] belong to the Lord and must be ransomed if not sacrificed to the Lord (Ex 13:1–2). God's claim on firstborns is largely unrecognized by humankind; His claim would seem unreasonable and arbitrary if it were recognized. Nevertheless, what typology reveals is that firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb will lose their lives as spiritual Babylon is dealt a below-the-belt blow that staggers and wobbles the prince of this world and his angels.

The many false prophets within Israel, natural and spiritual, will identify the second Passover slaughter of firstborns as the Sixth Trumpet Plague, for approximately a third of humankind will die in a very short period, between the 14th and 17th days of the second month of the sacred year (which will begin with the first observed crescent moon after the spring equinox in the northern hemisphere). But the death of these firstborns will be the ransom price paid for Israel's liberation from indwelling sin and death, not the world's liberation. The sixth Trumpet Plague is the ransom price paid for the third part (Zech 13:9) of humankind's liberation, and this ransom price is not paid until near the middle of the seven endtime years.

To repeat: there will be a second Passover ransom paid by unredeemed firstborns that today belong to God but live as part of this world. These firstborns will be sealed in death so that they cannot be lost to God during the seven endtime years of tribulation. But sealing a person in death to protect the person is not what human beings expect from God—and many of the survivors will curse God and will make war against the people of God, identifiable by Sabbath observance; for a third part of humankind will die. As important, the first or great king [or horn] of the spiritual coalition identified as the king of Greece will also lose his life because he is "first"; then those rebelling angels who have been cast into outer darkness (the bottomless pit) will realize that the death sentence under which they are imprisoned will be, and can be executed.

The Passover covenant made on the day when God took Israel by the hand to lead this nation out of Egypt did not include the Decalogue or the need to be physically circumcised or the promise of spiritual circumcision. A mixed multitude left Egypt with Israel, and this mixed multitude would not have been physically circumcised in Egypt and they were not physically circumcised in the wilderness. Nor were the children born

into the tents of Israel in the wilderness physically circumcised ... physical circumcision is not seen again until after Israel crosses the River Jordan under Joshua's leadership (Josh 5:2–7). So partaking in the exodus from Egypt did not require a person to be physically circumcised even though to eat of the Passover required a person to be circumcised (Ex 12:48). Circumcision, now, and the blood shed when a person is circumcised equates to the blood shed by Egyptian firstborns as ransom for Israel. Therefore, no one can enter into this Passover covenant at a future time unless the person is circumcised, physically or spiritually, until lives are again given for the ransom of Israel.

An uncircumcised Greek in the 1st-Century, prior to being a disciple, would not have eaten of the Passover, and the context of Jesus' comment about circumcision making well only a part of a man emerges: circumcision makes a man naked before God, makes the man covered only by his obedience to God. But when covered by obedience, the man is liberated from sin and death; he is healed so that he should live forever ... circumcision equates to liberation, or the exodus from bondage to disobedience. It is only when the man loses this covering of obedience that he needs another covering (fig leaves or animal skins). As long as a man has his covering of obedience, he has not returned to sin or to Egypt, the earthly representation of sin.

But physical circumcision was done to a man on the 8th day of his life—done before he could sin. Unfortunately, circumcision did not prevent a man from sinning; physical circumcision did not compel obedience. Hence, circumcision produced death when the promise of obedience is life. Therefore, spiritual circumcision does not occur until after a person cleanses his or her heart by a journey of faith that will leave the person living as a Judean. Spiritual circumcision doesn't automatically follow spiritual birth. Many disciples have died from spiritual SIDS before they were circumcised of heart.

The mixed multitude that left with circumcised Israel was covered by the loss of their firstborns in a manner similar to how the sons of Levi were ordained at the cost of their sons and brothers ... much blood is shed in the Law and the Prophets, too much blood for the sensitivities of modern Americans and Europeans. This shedding of blood has become a stumbling block that prevents “modern” nations from worshiping the *Theos* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or from recognizing the validity of Scripture. In most churches the Bible story has been rewritten with a blotter to remove the blood. The love of Jesus is emphasized, and the Law of Moses is devalued. The numbers recorded in Scripture are reduced: the 600,000 adult male Israelites that leave Egypt under Moses become 40 or 50, maybe as many as 200 in documentary dramas aired on *The History Channel*. Israel's exodus from Egypt is told as a good story that should not be taken literally, and the stumbling block of shed blood is covered by a mantle of disbelief.

The Passover covenant was not ratified by the blood of bulls and goats cast on the people and the altar, but by Passover lambs and the lives of Egyptian firstborns, both of men and beasts. At Calvary, the blood of the Lamb of God was shed on the 14th day of the first month at even as the Pharisees then reckoned when Passover lambs were to be sacrificed. But lambs slain on that first Passover in Egypt were killed the previous evening if Moses' command that none shall go out of their houses until morning was obeyed; so the one day difference has tremendous significance that has been lost. Again, when Jesus eats the Passover, He eats it at the beginning of the 14th of Abib, the first month. He is then sacrificed as the Lamb of God at the prescribed time when Pharisees taught that Passover lambs were to be sacrificed. So the Passover covenant was not

abolished when the Sinai covenant was added—if it had been abolished Jesus would not have eaten the Passover on the dark portion of the 14th. Rather, because of ambiguity within the covenant as to when the Passover lamb was to be sacrificed, two Passover sacrifices were needful in the 1st Century CE. This ambiguity enhances the annual provision for a second Passover in the second month to be eaten by all who were unclean or on a far journey on the 14th of the first month.

Two Passover observances annually, one the taking of the sacraments of bread and wine, one the feast celebration of the Night to be Much Observed; the first somber, the second joyous — rabbinical Judaism today eats the Seder meal twice each spring. Its reason for doing so, however, stems uncertainty arising from use of the calculated calendar, and not from any spiritual understanding.

There might not be more than 30,000 people annually taking the Passover sacraments on the dark portion of the 14th of Abib, and if this is the case, the Churches of God stand condemned before God as worthless servants who have hid the knowledge of God that they have.

When Jesus' disciples asked Him, "Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?" (Matt 26:17) — the disciples asked on the 13th — no one said that He would be eating the Passover a day early. The owner of the house where Jesus ate the Passover did not say that He was a day too early. So in the 1st-Century CE it was not unusual to eat the Passover on the dark portion of the 14th although Pharisees would not begin slaughtering Passover lambs (as far as records reveal) until the ninth hour [3:00 pm] on the afternoon of the 14th. And this apparent discrepancy, allowed by sloppily reading Scripture, highlights the failure of Israel to teach simple truths to a jaded world, turned off by hypocrisy and dishonestly.

V.

On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. ... There Israel encamped before the mountain while Moses went up to God. The Lord [YHWH] called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel." (Ex 19:1–6)

When Israel reached Mount Sinai, the nation's exodus from Egypt was recent history: Israel had been on the move for a month and a half. They had run out of food after a month (Ex 16:1–3), and they have been eating manna for two weeks. They had quarreled with Moses about the lack of water (Ex 17:2), and they defeated the Amalekites at Rephidim (vv. 8–13). God referred to what Israel had experienced as bearing Israel on eagles' wings and bringing the nation to Himself (Ex 19:4); yet that expression of having borne Israel on eagles' wings does not seem appropriate to an endtime generation that

flies the air-highways of the world [because of territorial claims, eagles themselves have such highways].

When war arises in heaven and Michael and his angels fight against Satan and his angels and Satan is cast into time (Rev 12:7–9), that old dragon will pursue the woman who had given birth to the male child (v. 13) who will rule all nations with a rod of iron (v. 5). “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, and times, and half a time” (v. 14) ... God said that He brought Israel to Him on eagles’ wings under Moses, and in John’s endtime vision God will again bring Israel, the woman, to Himself on two eagle wings. The first forms the shadow and type of the latter.

- Israel walked from Egypt to Sinai. There were neither planes nor chariots, nor wagons, nor horses.
- Israel’s journey was fraught with hunger, thirst, and enemies determined to slay the nation.
- If Israel’s journey to Sinai corresponds to (or forms the copy and type of) endtime Israel’s flight from the fallen prince of this world to the rest or refuge of God, then this flight on eagle wings will be unlike anything most prophecy pundits have prophesied.

Most importantly, the Sinai covenant by which Israel could become the holy nation of God comes after this flight, not before. Except for a few, the writing of the laws of God on hearts and minds becomes a reality in the second half of the seven endtime years of tribulation.

Of the many covenants of promise made in the law of Moses, the Sinai covenant occupies a unique position; for the Sinai covenant offers to the firstborn natural son of God (Ex 4:22) the promise of becoming the holy nation of God (Ex 19:5–6) if this “son” would keep everything God tells Moses. This covenant offered “holiness,” but offered it on the condition of obedience ... the Sinai covenant ends natural grace (Rom 5:13). Although sin, the transgression of the laws of God (1 John 3:4), entered the world through the disobedience of one man, and death through sin (Rom 5:12), this sin or disobedience is not counted against humankind where there is no law. Why? Because Adam was driven from the garden of God, and he and his descendants were consigned to disobedience so that God could have mercy on all (Rom 11:32). Their lawlessness was “covered” by their consignment to disobedience, and to being bondservants of the prince of this world. In a figurative sense, God delivered all of humankind as serfs to the king of Babylon when Adam was sent forth to till the ground that would yield thorns and thistles. God said to Adam, “By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Gen 3:19).

When the Lord led the fathers of Israel and Judah out of Egypt, He liberated them from bondage to Pharaoh; thus, their lawlessness was no longer covered by their servitude to this physical king. But the Lord also did not give Israel many commandments. He said only to select, pen, and sacrifice male lambs (either sheep or goats) and to do this year by year. He also said to consecrate firstborns of man and beast to the Lord, for all firstborns belong to God to do with as He pleased: two commandments, with these two not being a part of the Sinai covenant, or the Decalogue.

Note, the Passover covenant promises liberation, not eternal life. The Sinai covenant promises holiness upon obedience. It is the Moab covenant that promises spiritual

circumcision and inclusion into the holy nation of God that has been born of Spirit—it is through the Moab covenant that Israel could have inherited everlasting life, not through the commandments. Yet the terms of the Moab covenant requires Israel to keep all that is written in the book of Deuteronomy (30:10).

Today, Christians take more pleasure in sin than in righteousness, and most Christians will return to sin after they have been liberated from disobedience and disbelief. They profess love for Christ, but by their persistent lawlessness they show that they really despise Him and His shed blood. Yes, the person who will not, by faith, keep the precepts of God's law shows to man and angels how much this person despises God and all that God represents.

This manual is not a completed work, nor will it ever be a completed work. It does, though, address certain fundamental questions and can be used as a reference work although the date of the manual should be cited when a citation from it is used by a critic or scholar. As *Philadelphia* grows in grace and knowledge, changes will be made to this manual, notably inclusion of abbreviated Sabbath readings as these readings disclose additional understanding.

This manual should be read in conjunction with *A Fresh Look at Typology*.

A dishonest use of this manual will be to pit an earlier version against a later version. Changes in doctrinal positions will disclose growth in knowledge and will not be refutations of what is described in this manual, but rather, will be typographical corrections, plus theological refinements, advancements, and expansions of the precepts expressed herewithin.

Dated: 26 December 2008

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[\[The Philadelphia Church\]](#)