

December 20, 2014 2014

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Repairers

You shall be called the Repairer of the Breach

(Isa 58:12)

To All Who Obey Him

[Part One of Three]

For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not exalt Himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by Him who said to Him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten [fathered] you"; as He says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek."

In the days of His flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to Him who was able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverence. 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 5:1–10 emphasis added)

1.

Jesus, having been made perfect through learned obedience to God by way of suffering, has become the source and author of salvation ... there is no ambiguity in what the author of Hebrews writes. There is nothing difficult to understand. Christ Jesus is the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, with salvation representing escape from the physicality of this world that is passing away, escape through entrance into the timelessness of the supra-dimensional heavenly realm.

Jesus doesn't represent salvation to those who do not obey Him—

To all who obey Jesus, hearing His voice and His words that were given to Him by the Father, Jesus represents salvation, but this is not the case for those who do not obey Him: the author of Hebrews doesn't extend an olive branch to those who refuse to obey Jesus, who spoke only the words that God the Father gave Him. The author of Hebrews doesn't open the door of salvation to those who upon hearing Jesus' words dismiss what they hear, saying some form of Jesus didn't really mean what He said for *we know that salvation comes via faith, not obedience*. For to obey Jesus' words requires obedience in the form of *works*, in the form of outwardly pursuing righteousness through what the person does with hands and body, akin to Abraham believing God that his heir would

come from his loins, belief that was counted to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6), then belief tested (Gen 22:1) by being commanded to sacrifice Isaac, the son of promise.

Would Abraham's belief of God have continued to be counted to him as righteousness if he had refused to obey the Lord; refused to sacrifice Isaac? No, it wouldn't have! For if Abraham had refused to sacrifice Isaac, Abraham would no longer have believed that his heir would come from his loins through Sarah, his wife. Only by obeying the Lord's command to sacrifice Isaac could Abraham demonstrate that he truly believed the Lord, which he did as evidence by what he told the men who accompanied him to Mount Moriah: "Then Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; *I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you*'" (Gen 22:5 emphasis added).

If Abraham had refused to obey the Lord, his belief would have had no substance, no ontological presence in this world. His belief would not have been the benchmark of faith.

The Apostle Paul cited Abraham's belief of God as the exemplar of Christian belief of God (*faith, pisteos*).

What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. *The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.* For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. (Rom 4:1–15 emphasis added)

Abraham wasn't justified by works; by those things he did in this world, even in leaving his father and journeying southward into the land his heirs would inherit, then further south into Egypt, topographically the representation of sin. Abraham wasn't justified by a physical journey but by a mental journey, acceptance that he would have natural heirs despite his age—a journey of belief overcoming physical evidence, physical reality. And this is the journey every Christian has to take if the Christian is to have faith akin to Abraham's faith.

Circumcision of the flesh is of no benefit to the inner self, raised from death through receipt of a second breath of life: the breath of God [*pneuma Theou*] in the breath of Christ [*pneuma Christou*].

For Christians, the circumcision that matters is of the heart, a euphemistic expression for the person's inner self with circumcision of the heart causing the person to no longer be stubborn; no longer be enslaved by unbelief and disobedience but become tenderhearted, manifesting love for neighbor and brother, willing to lay down life and property for the support and/or defense of other Believers.

But the question at hand is how does a Christian take a journey of faith that overcomes reality? By believing that God the Father raised the man Jesus of Nazareth from death? Is this how?

Abraham's faith was tested when he was commanded to sacrifice Isaac. The Christian's belief of God is tested when it comes to obeying Christ Jesus, thereby imitating the man Jesus and living in this world as a Judean regardless of whether outwardly circumcised or not circumcised; for it isn't the outer self that is the disciple of Christ Jesus, but the inner self.

However, what Paul wrote (via the scribe Tertius) about Abraham's belief being counted to him as righteousness thus making Abraham the father of *all who believe without being circumcised* as well as *the father of all who are circumcised and who walk in the footsteps of faith that Abraham had* didn't address the testing of Abraham's faith—his belief of God counted as righteousness—when the Lord commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac; testing that required Abraham to transform inner belief into outer works, thereby making his faith complete ...

Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead. (Jas 2:20–26).

Paul's use of Abraham as the exemplar of Christian faith stops before Abraham is outwardly circumcised: "and to make him the father of the circumcised *who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised*" (Rom 4:12 emphasis added). Paul's ministry is to infant sons of God who spiritually are equivalent to human infants of less than eight days of age. Hence, Paul writes to the saints at Corinth,

But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way? (1 Cor 3:1–3)

And the author of Hebrews continues the citation used in the headpiece:

About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. (Heb 5:11–14)

Although circumcision of the flesh was never more than a sign to show that the person was *naked* before God, covered by nothing but the person's belief of God as Adam in the Garden had no covering but his belief of God manifested as obedience, circumcision of the heart is central to salvation; for circumcision of the heart pertains to the inner self's willingness to believe the words of Jesus ... it was unbelief that kept the nation of Israel that left Egypt from entering the Promised Land (Heb 3:19). It will be unbelief that keeps the majority of greater Christendom from entering heaven; it will be the hardness of the hearts of greater Christendom that sends this people into the lake of fire.

Circumcision of the flesh on the eighth day becomes symbolic of the spiritual age of the inner self of a humanly adult person when this person ceases to be stubborn and unresponsive to God, believes God, and begins to outwardly walk as a Judean in this world. Although this adult person might well be versed in Scripture, might well have knowledge about ancient texts, and might well be intellectually mature, the inner self of the person remains an infant son of God when this person ceases to be stubborn and begins to voluntarily keep the Commandments.

The infant son of God will, when comparable to a human infant of about one year of age, walk uprightly before God, keeping the Commandments, the High Sabbaths, cleans meats, thereby having grown a goodly amount since this son of God ceased to be stubborn, heard the voice of Jesus, and voluntarily believed God. But more growth remains before the son of God than has been made; for when this son of God is spiritually equivalent to a human three year old, this son of God will understand dual referents, which spiritually will have the visual, physical things of this world revealing and preceding the invisible things of God (Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 15:46). Until dual referents are spiritually understood, the mysteries of God cannot be understood—and about this, Peter wrote [probably in his own hand, having learned to write sometime after Calvary],

For this very reason, make every effort to *supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge*, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. (2 Pet 1:5–10 emphasis added)

Virtue is the application of the Law in this world. *Faith* is belief of God. And this belief needs, according to Peter, to be manifested in virtue: doing of those things that the Law commands. For only when the disciple adds “works” to the person's belief of God will the person acquire knowledge of the mysteries of God—and if the person adds voluntarily keeping the Law to the person's faith, the person will not be under the Law; i.e., under condemnation that comes from being a transgressor of the Law. Rather, the person having been set free from the condemnation that comes from being a transgressor will remain free if the person *chooses* to be a servant of righteousness:

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as

instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! *Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?* But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. (Rom 6:12–18 emphasis added)

Infant sons of God are without spiritual knowledge. When first born of spirit through the indwelling of the spirit of Christ, an infant son of God can only have *faith*, belief of God. But this belief needs to be made complete by the addition of virtue; by the addition of righteousness (Christ's righteousness) that gives to this infant son of God sufficient time to cease being stubborn and begin constructing his own righteousness as an undergarment beneath the cloak of grace ... grace ends when all of Christendom is filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God at the Second Passover liberation of Israel. At this moment in human history, every Christian will have no indwelling sin or death and will have no further transgression of the Law counted against the Christian. What will be counted against the Christian is unbelief, especially unbelief of the sort that would allow the person to transgress the Law regardless of whether any transgression actually occurs.

Greater Christendom enters the New Covenant, the Second Passover Covenant, on the Second Passover—and this covenant is,

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. *For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.* (Heb 8:10–12 emphasis added)

When sins are remembered no more, transgressions of the Law are remembered no more. Transgressions are not counted as *<sin>*; for effectively, the Law will no longer exist in a codified form. Rather, Christendom will enter a spiritual period analogous to the period in which Abraham lived. And this is what Paul understood, but didn't have either language to express what he understood or when this era would begin; for Paul believed he was living at the end of the era.

For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. ...

We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. *Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.* (1 Cor 10:1–6, 9–11 emphasis added)

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For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel,

and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. *Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.* Therefore encourage one another with these words. (1 Thess 4:15–18 emphasis added)

Encourage one another with these words—Paul would not have added this last line if Paul had not sincerely believed he was living in the last days when sin would be remembered no more because all of Christendom would be filled with spirit and liberated from indwelling sin and death ... Paul’s gospel was the correct message for when all of Christendom is filled with spirit and thereby set free from indwelling sin and death, but that period of liberation from indwelling sin and death begins with the Second Passover liberation of Israel, the nation to be circumcised of heart, not with the death of the Passover Lamb of God.

In the physical, Israel in Egypt sacrificed chosen Passover lambs at sunset [at even] on the 14th day of the first month. The death angel did not pass over all of the land until midnight, when the people were as far from the light as they could get—when sunset was as far behind them as sunrise was ahead of them. And this physical example reveals the spiritual reality that Paul did not grasp: Christ Jesus would not return in Paul’s natural lifetime, but would return after the third day of the “P” creation account, with the dark portion of this third day extending forward in time until the glorified Christ stands on the Mount of Olives to fight on a [indefinite article] day of battle (Zech 14:4).

The light portion of the third day begins with dominion over the single kingdom of this world being taken from the Adversary and his angels and given to the Son of Man (Rev 11:15–18; 12:7–12; Dan 7:9–14) and continues throughout the 1260 days of the Endurance in Jesus (Rev chaps 13–18 ... chap 19 addresses the fourth day).

Paul used the concept of *where there is no law there is no transgression* when he wrote,

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—for *sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law.* Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. (Rom 5:12–14 emphasis added)

The preceding needs to be closely read: there was a first Adam, and there was a second or last Adam. The first Adam saw Eve eat forbidden fruit and not die—and when he saw Eve, his wife, eat and not die he ceased to believe the Lord, not understanding that he [his obedience] was her covering for all she did, good or bad. He ceased to believe what he was told and believed, instead, what his eyes saw ... Adam ceased to believe God because of what his eyes saw—he believed his eyes rather than God. Thus, he ate forbidden fruit, and when he did, he lost his covering of obedience originating in his belief of God. Suddenly, both he and Eve were aware of their nakedness (they were without any covering). They had been physically naked before, but the covering of Adam’s obedience functioned as a garment just as the second Adam’s obedience [originating in Christ Jesus’ belief of God] functions as the garment of grace for Christians.

In moving from physical—the shadow and type of the heavenly reality—to spiritual, it isn’t the gloried Christ Jesus, seated at the right hand of God, that loses His belief of God, but the Body of Christ left here on earth ... Paul speaks of the Elect, those disciples

foreknown by God the Father, predestined to be saved, called by Christ Jesus, justified by the blood of Christ, and glorified by the indwelling of Christ in the form of His spirit [*pneuma Christou*] entering into the spirit of the human person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*] in a manner analogous to a husband entering his wife for the purpose of human procreation. And in speaking of the Elect, Paul expected that every person entering a Christian fellowship would imitate him (or the churches of God in Judea) as he imitated Christ Jesus, walking in this world as the man Jesus walked ...

Again, Paul didn't realize that the spiritual Body of Christ would die spiritually seventy years after Calvary as the fleshly body of Christ died physically at Calvary. Paul didn't realize that two millennia would pass without Christ returning. Paul didn't know the dominant organ in the Body would, long ago, begin to teach "realized eschatology" [that is, Christ's kingdom was here on earth in the form of the Latin Church]. But Paul did know that in the time of the end, transgressions of the Law—John's definition of *sin* (from 1 John 3:4)—would not be remembered by the Father; for the time would be like that in which Abraham lived before he received circumcision as a sign signifying that he, Abraham, walked uprightly before the Lord.

Question: would Paul, a Pharisee by schooling, in imitating Christ Jesus have eaten pork?

Second question, did Abraham eat pork?

When Abram, after passing through Shechem in the land of Canaan, didn't stop there but continued on to Egypt, Pharaoh saw Sarai and desired her and gave to Abram "sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels" (Gen 12:16), but no swine. Sheep and oxen for food, donkeys and camels for transport, and servants to tend the flocks and keep a household ... is there any way to know that Abram didn't consider the camel a meat animal? No, there isn't. But what's known is that ancient Egyptians did not eat camels, and associated pork with the evil god Seth even though pork was eaten in Lower Egypt.

Seth was one of ancient Egypt's earliest gods and a rival of Horus. He was a god of chaos, confusion, storms, wind, and foreign lands. Plus, he was believed to be a companion of the sun god Ra.

Using Greek myth in conjunction with Egyptian myth and the Genesis text, it seems that Seth as the son of Noah chased down and slew Osiris who shows up in Genesis under the name of his *title*, Nimrod. Seth [whose name means <*name*>] then ruled in Egypt for a long while (approximately 325 years) before returning to northern lands to be with his dying father. The people of Egypt originally perceived Seth as an ambivalent character, a god that was neither good nor bad. But during the Third Intermediate Period Seth was vilified and transformed into a god of evil, a god connected to the sea and by extension, sea salt which ancient Egyptians did not use.

Would Abram, from his stay in Egypt, have known of the connection between evil Seth and pork, or evil Seth and sea salt? We cannot know, but Abram in having flocks and herds probably didn't have swine herds but cattle herds.

The Torah, the Writings, and the early Prophets were redacted—that is, translated into Imperial Hebrew, narratively revisited, edited, and harmonized without doing irreparable harm to the text—between when the Scroll was found in the dilapidated temple in the days of Josiah and Jeremiah (2 Kings 22:8–11) and when a remnant of

Israel returned from Babylon. Examples of textual modification, however, remain in the text, with one such example seen in the story of the testing of Abraham;

Moses, quoting the Lord, presumably wrote, "I am [YHWH]. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as [*El Shaddai*], but by my name [YHWH] I did not make myself known to them (Ex 6:2–3). But when Abraham's words are read in translation—when Abraham who, according to Moses, didn't know the linguistic determinative YHWH (translated into both Greek and English as the singular identifier that is in English, *Lord*), this linguistic determinative becoming a naming noun in Imperial Hebrew—are read by endtime disciples, we find Abraham using this unknown to him determinative:

Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the angel of [YHWH] called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called the name of that place, "[YHWH] will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of [YHWH] it shall be provided." And the angel of [YHWH] called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares [YHWH], because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice." (Gen 22:10–18)

Elsewhere, Abraham said,

After these things the word of [YHWH] came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." But Abram said, "O Lord [YHWH], what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." And behold, the word of [YHWH] came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." And He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then He said to him, "So shall your offspring be." And he believed [YHWH], and He counted it to him as righteousness. And He said to him, "I am [YHWH] who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess." But he said, "O Lord [YHWH], how am I to know that I shall possess it?" (Gen 15:1–8)

According to Moses, Abraham did not know the Lord by the proto-Hebrew determinative YHWH. Rather, Abraham knew the Lord by the Ugarit word for God, used in the expression, *El Shaddai* [with a single /d/ used], understood as *God Most High*, the possessive plural <*Shaddai*> serving not as a *pluralis excellentiae*, but as a collective identifier for both the God of living ones [the deity that Abraham knew] and the God of dead ones that no human person knew before Jesus revealed the Father to His disciples ... the dead know nothing (Eccl 9:5), and all of humanity was spiritually dead until the breath of the Father descended in the bodily form of a dove and entered into [eis] the man Jesus of Nazareth, thereby causing Jesus to be born again or born from above, this second birth giving spiritual life to Jesus' inner self.

The only way for Abram to say, "O Lord [YHWH]," is for an Imperial Hebrew scribe to put these words in Abram's mouth a millennium after Abraham died and was buried

by his sons Isaac and Ishmael. Who this scribe was probably cannot be determined, but where he was can be: he was in Babylon, where Nebuchadnezzar as the earthly shadow and copy of the spiritual king of Babylon (see Isa 14:4), the Adversary, that old serpent the devil, ruled through exercising control of both the bodies and minds of Hebrew slaves.

Whether Abraham ate pork cannot be determined from Scripture; for certainly no Hebrew scribe would have permitted him to even take a bite of this unclean meat ... the scribe who put the words “O Lord [YHWH]” into Abraham’s mouth would have equally kept pork out of Abraham’s mouth; for Abraham was to be holy [because of his belief of the Lord] as his God was holy, meaning that no scribe would have permitted Abraham to eat a *common* meat and thereby be a part of the common pool of humanity.

Abraham’s belief of God set him apart from common humanity—and except for when he was in Egypt, it is most unlikely he would have eaten the flesh of swine ...

Jesus as an observant Jew would not have eaten pork. Paul wouldn’t have even though Paul wouldn’t have avoided eating a clean meat offered to an idol ... Greeks sacrificed bulls to Zeus, offering to Zeus the bull’s thigh bones by way of burning them, thereby leaving the remainder of the bull either to eaten by the person[s] making the sacrifice or sold in meat markets. This isn’t to say that Paul would have eaten roasts from a bull sacrificed to Zeus if in so eating he would have caused a brother weak in faith to stumble. Paul simply would not have allowed his freedom to eat otherwise clean meat made unclean through being sacrificed to an idol to cause an offense.

It would, however, be a mistake to believe that Paul deliberately sought out unclean meats to eat. If served meat from an unknown source or an unknown meat, Paul would have eaten for in not eating in Hellenist Asia Minor he would have caused offense. But if his host/hostess told him the meat was unclean according to Leviticus, for the sake of his host he would have declined eating the meat, not that eating would have defiled him but that in eating he would have harmed the inner self of the host, causing the host’s inner self not to believe God.

Why would an endtime Christian choose to eat pork or shellfish or any unclean meats, even with Jesus saying that it isn’t what enters the mouth that defiles the inner self of the person? What enters the mouth is physical, and is processed by the body into physical feces. It is what comes out of the mouth that defiles the Christian; for what comes out from the mouth discloses what is in the heart of the person, discloses the spiritual health of the person. And what would have come out of Paul’s mouth if his host told him the gray meat served was swine would have been polite words excusing himself from eating the meat—and again, this for the sake of the host who needed to know that Paul believed God even as he walked in newness of life.

Forty years ago, it was common for relatives of recent converts to Herbert Armstrong’s Worldwide Church of God to attempt to “trick” these converts into eating unclean meats; for Armstrong and his ministers didn’t understand Paul or what Paul wrote and therefore were overly zealous in avoiding unclean [common] meats. Disciples made by Armstrong had no understanding of the spiritual [non-physical] inner self that could not be defiled by what entered into the fleshly body through the mouth as opposed to what enter into the mind of the person and by extension, into the inner self. Armstrong’s disciples never understood that it was lust for *commonality* either in meats

or in worldly success or in physical relationships that defiled the Christian; yet Armstrong and his ministers regularly cited John's first epistle:

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever. (1 John 2:15–17)

For a Christian to lust for a juicy pork chop is for the Christian to spiritually defile the inner son of God even if no bite of pork is ever taken. The same applies to any of those things that are the *common* desires of humanity, such as physical wealth, authority in this world, or extra-marital relationships. It is lust that condemns the inner person (see Matt 5:27–28), not what the outer self does or doesn't do. Therefore, it is not all right for a Christian man to look with lust at any woman other than his wife. It doesn't matter how the woman appears in this world—whether she is in a tent or a thong bikini. What matters is the person's lust for strange flesh, with this lust going back to the era when “man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, [and] the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose” (Gen 6:1–2).

Sin was in the world from the moment the first Adam ceased to believe the Lord, but unbelief wasn't counted as sin because the Law had not been given; thus, death reigned from Adam to Moses, through whom Israel received the Law.

Death's reign over humanity didn't end because the Law was vocalized then given in inscribed words, but ended through Moses entering into the presence of the Lord as Moses was leading Israel out from the land of Egypt, with the Lord telling the prophet Jeremiah:

Behold, the days are coming, declares [YHWH], 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.* (Jer 31:31–32 emphasis added)

Who actually led Israel out from Egypt? The Lord told Moses that he, Moses, brought the people out from Egypt:

And [YHWH] said to Moses, "Go down, *for your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly out of the way that I commanded them. They have made for themselves a golden calf and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it and said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!"*" (Ex 32:7–8 emphasis added)

Moses—whose name means “*son of no-name*”—was the physical face of the Lord who brought the people of Israel out from Egypt. Moses was the personification of the Lord, the face of God that the people of Israel saw before the Passover liberation of Israel, saw after the Passover liberation, and no longer saw when he ascended Mount Sinai and was in the presence of the Lord. Aaron wasn't this face. No one but Moses, *the son*, was this face; thus, Moses served as the personification of the Lord, thereby being god to Aaron (Ex 4:16) and by extension, to the people of Israel, which is why Korah's rebellion against Moses and Aaron (Num chap 16) could serve as a type of the Adversary's rebellion against the Most High and His Beloved. For what Korah wanted

was representational democratic self-rule, with the assembly of the people having authority over Moses and Aaron.

Korah wanted what American Conservatives want: representational democracy, with a popularly elected Congress serving as the assembly served Israel in the wilderness. This desire for representational democracy actively opposes President Obama's use of Executive Orders and Presidential Memoranda—rule by decree. However, for Christians whose citizenship shouldn't be here in this world where their fleshly houses dwell but in heaven where their inner selves already have life if they have been born from above (born again or born anew), secular politics has little or no importance ... this is NOT, however, what is taught from most pulpits.

As long as the Adversary remains the prince of this world, the prince of the power of the air, all forms of *authority* in this world come through the Adversary, something Paul intuitively knew but didn't fully understand ... until dominion is taken from the Adversary (and his angels) and this dominion given to the Son of Man, every form of human governance uses authority that passes through the Adversary and is to genuine sons of God as Pharaoh was to Israel in Egypt. No form of human governance is today of God. And this includes authority within Christian fellowships, where the one who serves the most should be greatest, but *greatest* without secular authority; with only authority originating in the favor that comes from serving.

The Christian minister who would have parishioners serve him is a spiritual bastard, the son of the Adversary posturing as a son of God.

Abraham's belief of God did not cover Israel's unbelief in Egypt, or at Mount Sinai. Paul's belief of God; 1st-Century disciples' belief of God will not cover the unbelief of endtime spiritual Israel [the nation of Israel to be circumcised of heart] following the Second Passover liberation of Israel from indwelling sin and death.

What Paul wrote about Abraham's faith addresses Christian belief of God that would have Christians being voluntary doers of the Law. Re-cited for emphasis:

For God shows no partiality. 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.* (Rom 2:11–13 emphasis added)

And,

Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. (Rom 6:16–18)

A Christian, born of spirit, is no longer a slave of sin—a son of disobedience (Eph 2:2–3) consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32)—but has become a slave of righteousness, not free to do whatever the Christian believes is good and right, but free to keep the Commandments which the person could not before do because he or she was consigned [concluded] to disobedience.

The person not yet born of spirit cannot keep the Law and therefore cannot please God:

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the spirit set their minds on the things of the spirit. For *to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the spirit is life* and peace. 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 8:5–8 emphasis added)

For Paul, sin is unbelief: “For whatever does not proceed from faith [*pisteos* — belief, implied *belief of God*] is sin” (Rom 14:23). Thus, Paul places unbelief of God behind [preceding, as in being the cause-of] actual acts of the flesh, such as murder or adultery. For Paul, a person who doesn't believe God about coveting commits sin through the person's failure to believe; hence, Paul in writing about himself said,

What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet *if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."* But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. (Rom 7:7–8 emphasis added)

Apart from the Law, sin lies dead and isn't counted as sin even though death reigns over the person who sins; for again, all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law ... the problem is “sin,” the outer transgression of the Law that stems from manifested inner unbelief (manifested *belief* results in the person keeping the Law and not being a sinner through unbelief).

John came at the problem Paul faced in explaining *sin* from a differing perspective:

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure. *Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.* You know that He appeared in order to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen Him or known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. *No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God.* By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. (1John 3:1–11 emphasis added)

For John, sin wasn't transgression of the Law through the weakness of the flesh, but the “practice of transgression” that stems from being a son or bondservant of the Adversary (a son of disobedience). For John also wrote,

If we say we have fellowship with Him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. (1 John 1:6–10)

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps His word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in Him: whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked. (1 John 2:1–6)

From when the first Adam was driven from the Garden because of his unbelief to when the nation of Israel that left Egypt perished in the wilderness because of their unbelief to the present era of endtime disciples who will spiritually perish in the Affliction because of their unbelief, actual belief of God has been and will be rarely encountered ... Abraham believed, and continued to believe when his belief was tested at Mount Moriah. But even following the Second Passover liberation of Israel from indwelling sin and death, Christians collectively will not be as Abraham was. Christians will not make their faith complete by giving to their faith/belief ontological presence in this world. They will not make physical sacrifices [keep the Law] in order to imitate Paul as he imitated Christ Jesus.

[End of Part One. Parts Two and Three will follow.]

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