

## Endnote — *To be Much Remembered*

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Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts. Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwelling places. / These are the appointed feasts of the LORD, the holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight, is the LORD's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work. But you shall present a food offering to the LORD for seven days. On the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall not do any ordinary work. (Lev 23:2–8)

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1.

The iconographic custom of English printers to transliterate the always-unpronounced, determinative Hebrew Tetragrammaton [in Latin letters] *YHWH* as the word <LORD> printed in smaller size uncials retains the determinative quality of the Tetragrammaton, but has also led less educated Christians to not merely assign a substitute pronunciation to the determinative sign/glyph as Judaism does in *Adonai*, but to actually attempt pronouncing a sign that was never pronounced and was never intended to be pronounced ...

Historical criticism, the means of studying Holy Writ for the past two centuries in institutions of higher education, traces the emergence of Christian orthodoxy in the 4<sup>th</sup>-Century CE to the development of clergy, creed, and an established biblical canon, with Ignatius of Antioch in *To the Ephesians* (6.1) insisting that the laity was to “regard the bishop as the Lord himself” (Ehrman 217) — despite having just begun, pause and reflect for a moment: the prince of this world when Christ Jesus was crucified was the Adversary. At Calvary the kingdom of this world was NOT taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man (see Dan 7:9–14). The Adversary remained the prince of the power of the air

(Eph 2:2) when the canonized Epistle to the Ephesians was written. The single kingdom of this world remained under the dominion of the Adversary, the spiritual king of Babylon and his reigning hierarchy, when John saw his vision at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE, and in John's vision, John sees the kingdom of this world taken from Babylon by the Father and the Son (Rev 11:15–18) halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation that immediately precedes the coming of the Messiah, a futuristic event. The fall of spiritual Babylon is to this day a futuristic event. Therefore, the prince of this world through whom all earthly authority to rule comes, with the Most High God having delivered the single kingdom of this world into the hand of the Adversary for the destruction of the flesh (see 1 Cor 5:5 as an example text) ala the Lord delivering Jerusalem and the Kingdom of Judah into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 25:9) for destruction and everlasting destruction, is the *lord* whom the bishops in the proto-orthodox Christianity represented.

When the above is untangled, the last sentence of the preceding paragraph says that the Adversary became the *lord* of Christian orthodoxy through the establishment of an authoritarian **clergy** that used the **creeds** and the closed **canon** of Holy Writ to stifle opposition. The work of the Adversary in seeming to wrestle greater Christendom away from Christ Jesus, however, was a work given to the Adversary to do by the Father and the Son. This is correct: ultimately, all authority comes from the Father. The Adversary has no authority, no dominion that has not been given him by the Father. The alleged great controversy that Ellen G. White *wrestled* into her signature book really never happened; for once the *Jesus Movement* reached critical mass in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century (with *critical mass* being our expression for the smallest amount of fissile material necessary to sustain a nuclear chain reaction as in a bomb), the Father shut down the Body of Christ through drawing no more disciples to Christ. From a point that aligns closely with the Roman destruction of Herod's temple (ca. 70 CE), the Father quit drawing disciples to Christ Jesus as per John 6:44. He quit raising dead inner selves consigned to disobedience to life via giving to human persons a second breath of life, His breath [πνεῦμα Θεοῦ] in the breath of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ]. Thus, when the last of His sons—Christians who were actually born of spirit [πνεῦμα]—died physically, the Body of Christ died, with this spiritual death of the Body foreshadowed by the death of the earthly body of Jesus at Calvary.

If a person wishes, the person would not be wrong in thinking of Christianity as being the *bomb* that explodes in the Adversary's hierarchy to bring about the end of spiritual Babylon ... a nuclear chain reaction is when one nuclear reaction causes one or more nuclear reactions that lead to a self-propagating reaction, thereby releasing millions of times more energy than a chemical chain reaction, the basis for higher explosives such as C4 (cyclotrimethylene trinitramine). A nuclear chain reaction can occur naturally, a rare occurrence but known to have happened, but the concept of a nuclear chain reaction was not hypothesized until after the neutron particle was discovered in 1932. Hungarian Leo Szilard in 1933 realized that if a nuclear reaction produced neutrons which could cause further nuclear reactions, the process could be self-perpetuating. The energy input

necessary to produce the first nuclear reaction would be exponentially multiplied when critical mass was achieved; hence Szilard eventually went to Albert Einstein and ask Einstein to write his famous letter to President Roosevelt warning that Nazi Germany might be building an atomic bomb, the letter that ushered in the atomic age and the potential for the end of humanity in an all-out nuclear war that could turn the earth into another asteroid belt orbiting the sun.

In 1934, the ministry of Herbert W. Armstrong began, the first ministry that truly challenged Christian orthodoxy worldwide since the Protestant Reformation produced Anabaptist Christians as its logical spinoff in the 16<sup>th</sup>-Century CE. Although neither Anabaptists nor the Sabbatarian Churches of God [from which Armstrong emerged] will ultimately effect the lives of most living Christians as much as the reemergence of Arian Christendom in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century America, the emergence of the Sabbatarian Churches of God also comes from Sabbath-keeping Anabaptists in the 19<sup>th</sup>-Century America and leads the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century work of *Philadelphia*, the work that declares to the world as a witness to all nations the endtime good news that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13–14)—they shall be saved because all of the world will be baptized in the divine breath of God when the single kingdom of this world is taken from the remaining hierarchy of spiritual Babylon and given to the Son of Man, Head and Body.

The ministry of Herbert Armstrong could not be used to deliver the endtime gospel because, it, like for the most successful of the neo-Arian sects, used the primary weapon of Christian orthodoxy—an authoritarian clergy—to support its orthodoxy. It had to die and be replaced by a succeeding ministry, that of *Philadelphia* which has returned to the decentralized and non-authoritarian ministry of the Apostle Paul as found in scholars' *Pauline corpus*.

Therefore, when I speak of Christendom having achieved critical mass in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century, I'm not speaking about a *Critical Mass* for Christian orthodoxy, but about enough Christians having been called by the Father and the Son to sustain the *Jesus Movement* and thereby assure that the words of Jesus would reach endtime disciples born of God in the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century when Christendom explodes in the face of the Adversary after the Second Passover liberation of Israel, the nation to be circumcised of heart, through every Christian being filled with the divine breath of God.

But is there any assurance that endtime disciples will truly receive the words of Jesus, the word [ὁ λόγιον] or message of Jesus—

Scholars and critics studying Holy Writ ask a simple question that isn't really difficult to answer but a question that belies the concept that the Bible is the infallible word of God, with *infallibility* only able to be a condition of receipt, not of production, because the reader/auditor assigns linguistic objects to linguistic icons ever since the confusing of languages at the Tower of Babel. There is no hard link between what a word/sign means and the word/sign itself. Words do not carry around little back packs that tell the reader what the word means, and dictionaries are records of cultural uses of the word/sign, not its meaning.

Every word consists of three parts, (1) its inscribed image or sound image (i.e., the linguistic icon or signifier), and (2) the meaning that is assigned by a reading community to the icon/signifier, with there being almost as many reading communities as there are readers, and (3) an intangible element of *Thirdness* or the *Interpretant* or historical trace that produces stereotypical images. The English word <kine> for example is not a word regularly used in conversation even though it was once commonly used: the word is the plural of <cow>. Thus, when the youthful English speakers or readers encounter *kine* in a sentence, these auditors do not have a stereotypical image that instantly comes to mind, an image of two or more bovines in a field. The word didn't come with its meaning attached to it.

Take another once common word, <neat> ... isn't, you ask, *neat* still a common word? Well, if *neat* is a common word, explain what you think *neatsfoot oil* is. Is it oil made from tidying up around the house? Is it oil from having a well-groomed lawn, or a well-groomed personal appearance? Or is it oil made from the feet of *neat*, *kine*? Indeed, it is the latter: oil made from the hooves and lower shanks of cattle. *Neat* are bovines that can be milked, but the word didn't give you that meaning when you encountered it at the beginning of this paragraph, right?

To the words, the inscribed signifiers of Holy Writ, every individual Christian must assign meanings, with the meanings [signifieds] assigned coming from the reading community to which the auditor belongs.

If the actual words themselves of Holy Writ are necessary for salvation, why don't we have them? Why do we have copies of copies of copies of copies and not the actual words that Moses wrote, or that the finger of the Lord wrote on two tablets of stone? Why copies that contain edits and additions, and unintended spelling mistakes? Why were the books of Joshua and Judges added to Moses' words when Moses said not to add to His words? Why was the Book of the Covenant lost in the dilapidated Temple for long enough the those of the House of Judah quit circumcising themselves (see Jer 9:25–26), and the Passover according to Moses' instructions was not kept between the days of the Judges and King Josiah (2 Kings 23:21–23)?

The words/signs representing Holy Writ have some importance, but not all that much—for if they were to truly acquire importance as the Koran and its words have for Islam, then Christendom would idolize these words as Islam has made an idol of the Koran ... I used to use the “Q” spelling of the Koran out of respect for Islam, but no more. For since the rioting that followed the burning of defaced Korans by the U.S. military in Afghanistan, it has become readily apparent that the Koran is for far too many Muslims an idol, making Islam an idolatrous ideology, not something I would have written with force a year ago. And I will not support continued idolatry.

If the actual words of the Lord are essential for salvation, then the work of the Great Assembly after a remnant of Israel returned from Babylon to Jerusalem precluded all, themselves included, from ever having salvation; for the Great Assembly brought the scrolls that Israel had in their possession—and this after

the Book of the Covenant had been lost for generations—into the language of the scribes and priests, a language of phonetic morphemes, a language in which words as signs were pronounced, with one exception, the determinative glyph that is the Tetragrammaton *YHWH*, a carryover from the proto-Semitic language in which Moses, trained to read and write Egyptian hieroglyphs, used to transcribe the words of the Lord.

When in the days of King Josiah the Passover hadn't been observed as Moses commanded since the days of the Judges, and when the sons of Josiah abandoned his theological reforms as soon as they came to power, it really isn't to Judaism where a Christian can go for a model of how the Passover is to be observed: it is to the Lord Himself, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the living who had the glory He had before returned to Him when He was accepted as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering.

Christian orthodoxy's dogma that Jesus was simultaneously fully man and fully God cannot be found in Holy Writ, but comes from proto-orthodox Christendom's poaching of disciples from competing 2<sup>nd</sup>-Century Christian ideologies, with might account for that deer-in-a-spotlight look that Christians from Christian orthodoxy have when I explain the movement of the Law from hand to heart under the New Covenant as found in canonical Holy Writ, the most human of human books while still being the inspired word of God. And yes, from my youth I know a little about spotlighting deer, and a lot more about why the Law needs to be kept as a schoolmaster by Christians not yet truly born of God. Before Maglite flashlights became commonly available, I had a two-cell flashlight head to which I had soldered a length of chromed bathroom sink drainpipe so that I could have a small-headed seven cell flashlight in which I used a five-cell bulb, which was intensely bright for a short while before burning out—for long enough that I could feed myself from abandoned homestead orchards in the 1960s, after Oregon's Marion County District Court declared me an emancipated minor following Mom's suicide when sixteen (Dad had died when I was eleven) ... I read in an Internet biography that my brother Ken was an orphan. I never thought of myself as one, but maybe that was because of the flashlight and a .22 rifle and the ability to feed myself when the State said I was too young to operate power equipment in the workplace despite having declared me an emancipated minor.

Those Christians that knock on your door and are not from Christian orthodoxy also have that deer-in-a-spotlight look when I use their Bible to preach to them the movement of the law from hand (from regulating the outer self) to heart (regulating the inner self) that will have the Sabbath remaining the seventh day—it cannot be any other day—and the Sabbath commandment pertaining to the desires of the heart and the thoughts of the mind as per Matthew 5:21–22, 27–28 moving the commandments against murder and adultery from hand and body respectively to heart and mind. Jesus didn't magnify the Law as usually taught within Christian orthodoxy: He moved the Law to where it will be under the New Covenant when it is written on hearts and placed in minds (*cf.* Jer

31:31–35; Heb 8:8–12) and no one will teach brother and neighbor to *know the Lord*.

But it isn't Christian ministries that employ an uneducated—a non professional—ministry where Nicolaitan pastors are most commonly found: it is in the clergy of Christian orthodoxy, and even in the clergy of Sabbatarian Christian orthodoxy where Nicolaitans lurk as coyotes eager to devour lambs that haven't yet had their tails docked. It is through the concept of *clergy* where the Adversary's authority to reign over this world entered/enters into the Body of Christ. It is the ordaining of *clergy* that is inherently flawed.

Because of the season, consider the example of the Passover: Emperor Constantine at the Council of Nicea (ca. 325 CE) argued against the Christian Church continuing to keep the Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the first month with a logical observation, Christ Jesus as the paschal Lamb of God was not sacrificed on two days but once, and since it was the practice of Judaism to eat the Passover on two days, the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of *Aviv*, Christians should not imitate the Jews and take the Passover sacraments on the Passover but should institute a new festival, a new holy day, Easter. ... Who is Emperor Constantine? What assembly of Christ Jesus does he pastor? When was he born of spirit as a son of God and thereby began to keep the commandments of God while having love for brother and neighbor?

However, Constantine got a little right: Christians should not imitate idolatrous Jews, who had transformed the linguistic determinative Tetragrammaton *YHWH* into an idol with their monotheism ... the Adversary is more subtle than Sabbatarian Christians have realized, and far less creative that he needs to be. For the Adversary used the same ploy of transforming monotheism into an idol to deceive proto-orthodox Christians as he used to deceive Judaism centuries before. He had his clergy turn the Christian biblical canon into an idol of the sort now seen in Islam. And he used the creeds to prevent greater Christendom from coming to the Father and the Son in spirit and in truth in a manner similar to how he used the oral Torah to keep Judaism from coming to the Father and the Son—and then, he shuffled his cards [clergy, creed, and canon] and dealt himself another winning hand through having Emperor Constantine sit in on the game and participate in a meaningful way at the Council of Nicea.

The fire that has come and is to come [depending on your perspective, that of heaven or earth] from the belly of the Adversary cannot come soon enough.

When a sect within greater Christendom—the Sabbatarian Churches of God—got too close to truth, the Adversary ratcheted up his deception through introducing the concept of pronouncing what has never been pronounced; of pronouncing the always unpronounced linguistic determinative *YHWH*, a glyph or sign that represents the conjoined God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the living (Matt 22:32), and the unknown-to-Israel God of the dead, the Father, the God of Christ Jesus and of His disciples. He introduced the Sacred Names Heresy that has English speakers using bastardized Hebrew to mutilate any Hebrew word that has in it the letter '*Ayin*.

As a very quick semantic lesson: a determinative sign or glyph is used in inscription [written text] for purposes of disambiguation such as identifying *who* said what and in *what* language, information that would be known or conveyed orally when hearing speech—

When a person hears another person speak, the hearer knows who said what and in what language, but a reader of a transcription of this speech doesn't necessarily know what the hearer knows; thus early inscription sought to convey to the reader the same information that the hearer had through the inscription of unpronounced determinative signs or glyphs.

Again, a determinative sign or glyph was never pronounced—was never intended to be pronounced. It existed in early forms of inscription to more effectively have the inscription faithfully form the mimetic image of actual utterance. But once a written language becomes fully based on phonetic morphemes, determinative signs and glyphs disappear from the language *for they were never pronounced*. Thus, in a culture's characteristic movement from *orality* to *inscription*, ideograms and other forms of logographical inscription use determinative glyphs that initially have meaning but usually lose meaning over time *because they were never pronounced*, and with their loss of meaning they were eventually dropped from inscribed texts.

Moses would have used determinative glyphs/signs when writing in proto-Hebrew as Israel left Egypt. It would have been how he was trained to write, and it was the linguistic practice all of peoples in the Levant mid 2<sup>nd</sup>-Century BCE. It would have been the practice of his father-in-law if his father-in-law was literate.

The Christian who attempts to pronounce a determinative sign or glyph from early inscription is not well educated ... it would be more comforting to think that the Sabbatarian Christian who denies Christ Jesus and mocks the Father by attempting to pronounce the determinative Tetragrammaton *YHWH* is simply ignorant, but in reality this Sabbatarian seeks to spread a poisonous heresy that kills every disciple inflected by it. The heresy is truly 100% lethal. Thus, any Sabbatarian caught spreading the Sacred Names Heresy is to be marked and cut off, which will not stop the spread of heresy but will quarantine these who have been inflected.

Because Judaism lost the Book of the Covenant and did not keep the Passover as Moses commanded for generations, again, it isn't to Judaism that Christians can go to recover what was lost: it is to Christ Jesus. For even though the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God, they were not faithful in retaining them ... what would be less faithful than losing the Book of the Covenant and not keeping the Passover? How much lower can a people entrusted with a task go? ... At least the scribes in the post-Babylon period told on themselves and for that they deserve some credit. But the stone tablets from the Ark of the Covenant were lost—the Ark of the Covenant never returned from Babylon. Vessels from Solomon's temple returned, but not the Ark. So when officers from Antiochus IV Epiphanes entered the temple and the temple's Holy of Holies and found it empty, they did not have to remove the Ark to install a statute of Zeus—

Can you imagine what Seleucid officers thought when they entered the Holy of Holies: *There's no god here; these priests are conning the people, having them worship thin air!* And there is more here than realized; for in temple officials having Jews in Judea worship what wasn't present, these Jews were actually being prepared to receive the *holy breath* [πνεῦμα ἅγιον].

Regardless, temple officials were dishonest men, with their dishonesty most apparent on *Yom Kipporim*, when the high priest was to make atonement for himself and the people of Israel through blood being smeared on the Ark of the Covenant. Without an Ark in the Holy of Holies, the high priest enacted a charade, which the next high priest probably mentally justified because this is what his successor had done—and after all, if having the Ark in the Holy of Holies was truly important, wouldn't the Lord have returned the Ark with the temple vessels that the Babylonians had safely held when not attempting to drink from them?

It is in this logic where a person needs to take care: if the actual words of the Lord were important, wouldn't these words have been faithfully preserved so that endtime linguists and believers can examine them—or would preserving the actual words have transformed these texts into idols to be worshiped by believers? The latter is true: if we had the two stone tablets that Moses lugged down from Sinai, Christian and Jews would worship these tablets rather than the Lord. The tablets had to be lost or destroyed as Moses' body had to be buried in an unknown location. The earliest texts—words Moses truly wrote—had to be lost or destroyed or they would have been idolized. Same for the epistles that Paul actually wrote, or the Gospel that Matthew wrote or that John wrote. A copy of a copy is more difficult to idolize, but can be done through declaring the Bible to be the infallible word of God. And observation of the high masses of the Roman Church discloses how a book can be transformed into an idol.

A Christian has to by faith accept that the Bible he or she has in hand is a reasonably reliable copy of the original text that was destroyed if for no other reason than to prevent it from being idolized. Scholars and critics don't dwell in the realm of faith. They don't write apologetics, but scholarly essays describing what can be determined from observation. Hence, when scholars are poor readers of text as, unfortunately, many are, or when scholars don't realize exactly how poor of readers post-Babylon Jews were, then much trash gets inserted into *scholarship* that needs to be thrown away in a manner analogous to Jesus thrice cleansing the temple.

## 2.

Rabbinical Judaism observes the Passover on two consecutive nights, the dark portion of the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Aviv* and the dark portion of the 16<sup>th</sup> of *Aviv*. This practice of observing the Passover on consecutive nights has its roots in Holy Writ, but the nights walked forward a day sometime after King Josiah had Judah keep the Passover as it was presented in the Book of the Covenant. For Israel, circumcised of heart and uncircumcised of heart, should keep a remembrance of the Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> and on the 15<sup>th</sup>, on the dark portion of each, with the Christian



sacraments of Bread and Wine taken only on the night of the 14<sup>th</sup>, and with a festive gathering to occur on the night of the 15<sup>th</sup>.

The former Worldwide Church of God titled the festive celebration that occurs on the dark portion of the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Aviv*, *The Night to be Much Observed*, or *The Night to be Much Remembered*, and had its fellowships gather on this night for a meal and remembrance of this being the night that Israel left Egypt ... there is another reason for observing this night: on the late afternoon of the day when Jesus ascended to the Father and was accepted as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering, He returned to breathe on ten of His disciples and declare, *Receive the breath holy* [πνεῦμα ἅγιον] (John 20:22), thereby creating the last Eve, the Christian Church.

Yes, this is when the spirit [πνεῦμα] was given, not fifty days later on Pentecost.

As *The Night to be Much Remembered* commemorates Israel's exodus from Egyptian slavery, this night should also form a remembrance of Jesus' disciples escaping the enslavement of sin and death. But more of this later.

For me, the annual celebration of *The Night to be Much Remembered* always brings back memories of Alaska's Kenai Peninsula ... I wrote a few words about those memories years ago, words I will include here for reasons other than what they say:

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### *To Be Much Remembered*

The pastor of a Boise, Idaho, Sabbatarian congregation objected to the connotations the noun "potluck" might or might not have. He insisted that in his church, shared community dinners would be called "Covered Dish Affairs." He instructed his deaconesses to make sure luck played no part in what was brought to church dinners. His intention was to elevate the status of these dinners above that of chili or spaghetti feeds.

When I first heard his reference to covered dish affairs, the phrasing "his church" struck me as odd. But I let the phrase pass since after many years in Alaska, I had become used to "potluck" being used as a verb for how, each spring, to dispose of a freezer full of dead salmon. I don't jest. A person potlucked his or her frozen salmon any time after the oils in the fish turned rancid. It was criminally and morally wrong to store salmon for the last months of winter in the city garbage dump; that was wanton waste. Responsible individuals developed recipes for potlucking salmon at covered dish affairs, while hoping his or her dish would be left out warm for long enough it should be fed to the dogs when brought home.

On the Peninsula, reds or sockeye salmon return to the Kenai River by the hundreds of thousands, but on even years pinks return by the millions. I arrived on the Kenai in 1974, a pink year. While I had never before caught a pink, I had caught tons of Chinook salmon [kings], silvers and steelhead, the catching of which requires some degree of skill. Along the Oregon Coast, the only stream I knew of that had a small run of pinks was Little Nestucca Creek (one tributary of the Yaquina River had a small run of sockeyes, which was/is/remains, I believe, unknown to Fish and Game, so other streams could have small runs of pinks).

Pinks or humpies are little salmon, three or four pounds apiece, with some males reaching seven pounds. They are commercial fodder for seiners and setnetters. They lack the mystique of steelhead or Atlantic salmon; they are not salmon a person brags about catching. But they are determined fighters, determined to return to spawn in any flowing water. On Kodiak, I saw one, its eyes pecked out by gulls, crossing a damp lawn, following the flow of a garden hose. But they deteriorate quickly, their deterioration caused by hormones regardless of whether they have reached freshwater. Their bellies turn white; their backs turn green; and the males develop the exaggerated hump which gives them their name, Humpback salmon. Their flesh lacks, even before their change, the intense coloring of reds or silvers; so once their change begins, their flesh lightens even more and softens. In freshwater, as tablefare, they are not worthy of being called salmon. But I have seen such "watermarked" pinks on ice in an Albertson's in Pocatello, and in a Kroger's meat case in Paducah, both times far from where they were caught.

But the Kenai River full of pink salmon is a lure that catches even experienced fishermen. I was no exception. When I encountered the Kenai full of pinks, bank to bank, a hookup every cast or nearly so, I couldn't resist: I brought home my six salmon a day until there wasn't room enough in the freezer for a moose steak. And I wasn't alone. Every member of the Kenai Church of God had likewise filled their freezer with pinks. These were all watermarked fish, cheechako fare. They should have been left to spawn undisturbed. And their soft flesh certainly didn't improve any with seven, eight, nine months of cold storage.

Yes, if our collective consciences would have allowed, we should have fed all of those dead salmon to bears when they emerged from hibernation spring 1975 ... it is possible the reason bears never developed freezers is they know what salmon tastes like in the spring.

In fairness to the women of the Kenai Church of God, it was all their husbands' fault: if Peninsula husbands didn't shackle their wives with freezers full of dead salmon that must be recycled before bright Kings began to run in May, then maybe more spaghetti and lasagna would have been brought to church dinners.

I didn't realize until I had been on the Kenai for a few years that we, as a church, never had summer or fall communal dinners. Get-togethers always began occurring about when the oils in summer-caught and frozen salmon started turning rancid. That was when to begin potlucking your salmon. Pinks are the first that needed to go. On odd years when there were few pinks in the Kenai, get-togethers would be delayed a few weeks until kings and silvers were inedible. And only commercial fishermen who hadn't put up pinks or silvers for their own use ever potlucked reds (sockeyes).

The first church get-together I attended in Alaska was in the spring of 1975: it was the *Night to be Much Remembered*. Four rows of four, 4x8 foot tables heavily loaded with salmon dishes somehow magically appeared. If my calculations are anywhere near correct, that was approximately a thousand square feet of salmon in loafs, in casseroles, in cream sauces, in fritters, in disguise, salmon plain, salmon steaks on herb bread, salmon about every way it can be fixed except fresh. And my wife contributed her share of salmonfare—she tried to hide her casserole on the second table of row three, but it was there waiting for her when we got ready to leave, hours later.

There is an art to potlucking salmon: the art is in disguising the fish so the dish looks like something edible. Lasagna for example. Even spaghetti and meat balls. I had good luck one year with a taco salad. But church members were as smart as they appeared. If they were fooled into trying a pan of salmon lasagna one get-together, they avoided all pans of lasagna next time. But a few fellows would always sucker on pots of chili (I think

they tried the different pots of chili for the hot peppers they couldn't otherwise get at home, and it was worth tolerating a little potlucked salmon to sample good peppers in Alaska, a state where misplaced Texans linger like spindrift on river banks).

The real breakthrough in potlucking salmon came when the Kenai and Anchorage Church[es] of God began catering a free barbecue to Outside visitors all Sunday afternoon during the Feast of Tabernacles. Most years, Feast occurred early enough in the fall that a fellow could potluck his salmon and still have time to refill his freezer with Interior caribou or deer from Kodiak. And Outside visitors seemed to think they were getting a treat when they were served as much potlucked salmon as they wanted.

After five years, I left Kenai for Kodiak and Unalaska—both islands have pinks runs every year. I tried hard to avoid catching pinks, but every so often I would kill one accidentally and would have to bring it home. It would get tossed in the freezer and forget ten ... it would still be there in spring.

Once I left Kenai, I was often asked, "Don't you miss being in a church area?"

One reason I didn't return to Kenai when I left was that I didn't need everybody knowing my business. But I never felt comfortable saying, *No, I don't miss the gossip*. I should miss assembling together with others of like mind. I should miss getting together with friends. I should even miss fellowshiping with a deacon who didn't understand authority the way I did.

But we were receiving sermon tapes, and on Kodiak, we had a steady stream of deer hunters staying with us on and off for five months of the year. Then there were halibut fishermen in the spring. We had company almost every week of the year. So I would tell whomever asked if I missed being in a church area that, "When I start missing Kenai, I just go to the freezer, rummage around until I find a dead Humpy, the more freezer burned the better," and they would start laughing and never let me finish what I was going to say.

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*His church* — this pastor is (as far as I know) now employed by the *United Church of God, an International Association* (UCG). He wasn't struck down by Christ Jesus for taking ownership of the assembly he was assigned to shepherd. His quiriness was ignored by his employers, as was his sexism. He could effectively preach the party-line when he was off visiting new contacts in Oregon, none of whom were ever baptized in the near term.

Scholars and critics understand that the congregations of Paul mid 1<sup>st</sup>-Century were a mess, unorganized and filled with squabbling; yet Paul sought to correct the problems in these congregations by appeals to behavior fitting of a person born of God. ... The principle reason for quarantining the Pastoral Epistles as not being of Paul but of a later proto-orthodox Christian who didn't like women much comes from their criteria for the formation and ordination of *clergy*.

When Paul wrote his epistles that are accepted by scholars and critics to be genuinely of him, Paul didn't then realize that no one can come to Christ Jesus unless the person is drawn from this world by the Father raising the person's inner self from death through giving to the person a second breath of life, the breath of God in the breath of Christ. This was something Paul knew and understood, but not really. It is something he more intuited than fully comprehended; so as with Paul writing that disciples are individually and

collectively the Body of Christ and as such the temple of God, then going himself into Herod's temple to worship—which was worshiping in an idol's temple although no Christian convert from Judaism would have realized this in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century—Paul preached and baptized many who were never called by God.

The above is a problem that remains to this day: how does one know if another Christian is truly born of God, with the only reliable answer being found in 1 John 3:1–10 and Romans 8:5–11.

In the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE, upon hearing Paul preach the solution to paganism's greatest problem of how does one know if he or she is worthy of entering heaven, a great many Greeks accepted Christ Jesus as their personal Savior without ever being called and drawn by the Father. These converts were not born of spirit, and thus couldn't produce the fruit of the spirit. Nevertheless, they formed a significant percentage of Paul's converts as evidenced by how quickly they turned from Paul when he became a prisoner of Rome.

But Christian critical mass had to be reached as soon as possible.

Because Paul's congregations were filled with converts who upon hearing the magic formula for salvation of “professing Jesus with their lips and believing in their hearts that the Hebrew God had raised Jesus from death” had been baptized, Paul's congregations behaved as any assembly of devout pagans would behave. This isn't to say that there were none truly born of spirit within the assemblies Paul raised up, but this is to say that there were few at best—for in a misapplication of Jesus' words, *Many are called but few are chosen* (Matt 22:14), many were baptized but few were called.

Among the *many* in 1<sup>st</sup>-Century fellowships, *few* were actually born of God, with the evidence for this claim being in how quickly most Christians fellowships put away all things Jewish and continued to live as they had before, with their focus being on their families, not on walking in this world as Jesus walked. Hence, when they truly understood what Paul taught, they fled from Paul as fast as they could.

Within greater Christendom, not much has changed between late 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE and early 21<sup>st</sup>-Century. Christian congregations cannot agree on such basic premises as whether God is *one*, *two*, or *three* deities functioning as one entity as a man and his wife are one flesh that seems to change its appearance with each divorce. Arian disciples have as much right to the identifying noun *Christian* as have Trinitarian disciples, for neither keep the commandments and have love for their brothers, born and unborn. All of these fellowships belong to someone other than Christ Jesus; for the fellowship that is of Christ will walk in this world as Jesus walked, meaning that the fellowship will keep the commandments from the inside out.

If a person were going to build a race car, the person wouldn't win many races in the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century if he or she started with a Lotus body and into this body placed a flathead Chrysler Crown engine that will slowly propel the car to the race's finish line. If a Christian were going to start a ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century, the Christian's ministry would not survive long if it were organized as Paul's congregations were—unless every disciple involved in the ministry were truly

born from above. And that is the key: in this world a genuine Christian ministry that is based upon disciples having love for one another can slowly motor around and finish the race, being able to repair itself as a mechanic rebuilds a Crown by pouring new Babbitt bearings, the Crown being a low rpm engine that is nearly indestructible. But all of those Christian ministries that milk their congregations for moneys as if disciples were cash cows will quickly eclipse the ministry of the one who doesn't ask for contributions, but works as Paul worked, relying upon the Father and the Son to supply needs.

Paul wrote,

This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to eat and drink? Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same? For *it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop. If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel. But *I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to secure any such provision. For I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of my ground for boasting. For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!* For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my reward? That in my preaching I may present the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. *I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.* (1 Cor 9:3–23 emphasis added)*

Note, Paul cites the law as the authority for a Christian disciple supporting his or her teacher—then he goes on to say that to those under the Law [Jews] he

became as one under the Law, but to those who were not under the Law [Gentiles] he became as one outside the Law that he might win some to his gospel ... doesn't this sound suspiciously like Paul preached to Jews what Jews wanted to hear but preached to Gentiles what Gentiles wanted to hear? Actually, what's said is that Paul tailored his message to his audience in the same way a Native American storyteller tailors an oral narrative to the storyteller's audience, which is why a story told to a scholar with a tape recorder is much more austere than the same story told to Native adolescents. The tape recorder is an unresponsive audience; so the story told to it is a barebones presentation of a dynamic narrative.

Scholars and critics have reservations about how accurate Luke's history is as written in the book of Acts, for Paul in Acts and to Athenians on Mars hill doesn't say that *these pagan Greeks are responsible for not worshiping God as God* as Paul seems to say that pagans are responsible for their idolatry in Romans chapter one ... but Paul's treatise to the holy ones at Rome was written to believers whereas his sermon to pagan Greek philosophers on Mars hill was delivered to those who were outside the Law. So the problem historical criticism has with Paul's messaging originates in Paul's desire to convert those who were not born of spirit, drawing these converts into fellowship with Christ Jesus, a fellowship that they cannot have because the Father has not drawn them from this world.

The above is a convoluted way of saying that Paul made a mistake, not a serious mistake, but one that revealed he did not understand everything that he would write in his epistles; for preaching-to and baptizing those who who have not truly been born of spirit will result in a certain number of conversions (maybe even a great number) that are all false. Hence, the fellowships Paul began left him, with very few disciples remaining with him when he was martyred—about as many as we of *Philadelphia* would have expected to see.

Now, returning to the concept of congregational *ownership*: that *covered-dish* pastor in Boise didn't own the disciples to whom he ministered even though he apparently thought he was their *lord*. But despite the imaginations of his mind, they were not his. In fact the former Worldwide Church of God made a practice of rotating ministers into and out of areas every seven years so no sense of ownership would long exist, but the practice was not really successful because of the concept of *clergy* imbedded within the organization's hierarchy.

In the ordained ministry of any fellowship will be found the concept of *clergy*—why else would there be an ordained ministry? And it is from this perspective that the Pastoral Epistles attributed to the Apostle Paul must be approached ... those of us of *Philadelphia* have an example, actually two examples upon which we can draw that scholars and critics practicing historical criticism do not have: that of the ministry of Andreas Fischer [dod 1540 CE], and that of the ministry of Herbert Armstrong [dod 1986 CE].

The spiritual Body of Christ died at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup>-Century CE as the physical body of Jesus had died seventy years earlier. And as the last Elijah, the glorified Jesus breathed His breath into this dead Body beginning about 1525 CE,

1200 years after the Corpse of Christ was buried by the Council of Nicea in 325 CE, with this last Elijah having to thrice breathe His breath into Christian disciples before disciples would breathe on their own following the Second Passover liberation of Israel, with the two witnesses being the principles that publicly breathe on their own as Christ Jesus had indwelling life in Him during His ministry (John 5:26).

Most scholars and critics would agree that the dynamics of Christian orthodoxy changed in 1517 with Martin Luther nailing his theses to the church door, and changed even more with the Swiss Protestant Reformation ... in 1519, Felix Manz with his thorough knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin came to Zurich and became a follower of Huldrych Zwingli. When Conrad Grebel joined as a follower of Zwingli in 1521, Manz and Grebel became friends. Along with Zwingli, they questioned the mass, the nature of church and state interrelationships as well as infant baptism: they wanted change, and change right now, and *change they could believe in*, borrowing President Obama's electioneering phrase. Thus, after the Second Disputation of Zurich in 1523, in which Zwingli changed sides and began to support the status quo, they became dissatisfied with Zwingli's leadership of his study group, and they began a group of their own.

On January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1525, the same day of the year when Herbert Armstrong rejected revelation and when I, forty years later, was called to reread prophecy, a public debate was held in Zurich over the question of infant baptism. Zwingli understood that if infant baptism was invalid, then the entirety of the Christian Church was spiritually dead; thus, he vigorously argued against Grebel, Manz, and George Blaurock, the founders of the Swiss Brethren Movement, the so-called Anabaptist Movement. Zurich's city council sided with Zwingli and ordered Grebel's group to cease its activities and to submit any unbaptized children to the Church for baptism within eight days. The order was delivered to Grebel on January 18<sup>th</sup>, the date of my father's death, an odd coincidence.

Grebel's group met illegally on January 21<sup>st</sup>, and George Blaurock asked Grebel to baptize him: afterwards, Blaurock baptized Grebel and Manz and the other's present, and the Anabaptist Movement was underway, with one of the Movement's earliest converts being Andreas Fischer, who quickly went beyond Grebel, now on the run, and began keeping the Sabbath instead of the day-after-the-Sabbath [τῆ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων — from John 20:1; Luke 24:1]. And for his double flaunting Christian orthodoxy, Andreas Fischer and his wife were hung in 1528/29 ... but Fischer lived and emerged as an Anabaptist leader between 1529 and 1539/40, when he and his second wife were beheaded, making it much more difficult for his body to be returned to life.

In the ministry of Andreas Fischer is seen the glorified Jesus' first attempt to resurrect the Corpse of Christ as the prophet Elijah took three attempts to resurrect the son of the widow of Zarephath.

But also in the ministry of Fischer is seen the drift from attempting to return the Church to the commandments to returning the Church to Judaism; for at the end of Fischer's ministry, he apparently began to think that circumcision of the

flesh had value. So from the perspective of *Philadelphia*, Christ removed Fischer from the scene so that he couldn't screw up the good work he had done for the past dozen years. By removing Fischer just as he was drifting into error, Fischer's reward in heaven was secured.

Now, the second example, that of the ministry of Herbert Armstrong: in a small personal and a larger radio ministry, Armstrong began teaching disciples to keep the commandments in 1934 after seven years of self-study that left him still a spiritual novice. Originally, he exercised no heavy handed authority in the congregations he raised up, congregations upon which he was dependent for support to keep his radio ministry going. Thus, when outside pastors and would-be Christian teachers began poaching disciples from him, Armstrong changed his ways about 1939, and began to exercise Nicolaitan-type control over his congregations. But there wasn't enough of him to go around, so in 1947 he started a small Bible college for the purpose of training ministers who would teach his understanding of Holy Writ to congregation raised up from his public preaching.

Armstrong's ministry prospered in this world—why shouldn't it? Once he borrowed the concept of *clergy* from Christian orthodoxy, he drew upon the Adversary's dominion over the single kingdom of this world for his authoritarian rule.

All authority regardless of where it appears in this present world comes from God through the Adversary—and this is especially true for political organizations and for religious institutions.

The public face of Armstrong's ministry was polished, well groomed, and manicured. But behind this public face there were authoritarian issues; for his ministers, almost all Nicolaitans, behaved as if their parishioners were personal servants ... I was once chewed out because, after half a day of lathe work (in 1977), I charged a WCG pastor \$40 for the brass cannon I made for the pastor's son. The mistake I made—my shop time was then \$37.50 per hour, comparable with other shops on the Kenai Peninsula—was in not charging the pastor \$190. for the cannon, \$40. for the brass and \$150. for shop time. As it was, I was doing the work gratis so I didn't appreciate the lecture. And a decade or a little more later, the then-former pastor wondered why I didn't come to a reunion potluck given to celebrate the silver anniversary of the Kenai Church [I was then in Kodiak, and didn't have the free time available to return to the Mainland, true, as well as convenient].

Armstrong either died or had a near-death experience in late 1977 or early 1978: details of exactly what happened when were conflicting when initially given and I haven't had enough interest in the matter since to untangle the stories. He claimed to have died and to have been brought back from death, and for me, that's good enough; for when he was able to resume preaching in the fall of 1979, I was in Dutch Harbor. He claimed that the entirety of his Worldwide Church of God had *jumped the tracks & were on the wrong track*, a use of equivocation I found interesting. For in the late fall of 1979, I made a mental inventory of where WCG members were and what they were doing, including myself—I was then harvesting king crab in the Dutch Harbor District for my boat wasn't tanked—and



what I found is that every person I knew about wasn't where the person should be and were doing what the person ought not be doing. Truly, his ministry had *jumped the tracks* and was headed in multiple wrong directions.

For the period between January 1980 and January 1986, Armstrong preached about nothing much else than disciples getting back to the basics, with his sermons repeatedly going back to the Garden of Eden and the Temptation Account that he didn't understand even though the *parakletos* was telling him that this was where he went wrong.

On January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1986, Armstrong died ... I'm firmly convinced that if Armstrong hadn't come back to work as hard as he did to return his ministry to its roots, Armstrong wouldn't make it into the kingdom, that as Andreas Fischer was removed from the scene when he drifted into error, Armstrong was brought back to realize and try to correct his error that had him not understanding the relationship between Christ Jesus as the Head of the Church and the Body of Christ, the Church, a relationship symbolized in Adam being the head of his wife, Eve (see 1 Cor 11:3).

When it became apparent that Armstrong wasn't getting it, his ministry ended, killed by figuratively two bullets into his head, and the way was prepared for the last Elijah to again breathe His breath into the spiritually dead Body of Christ.

Now, taking all of this back to Paul and the disputed authorship of the Pastoral Epistles: Paul was taken prisoner when he returned to Jerusalem despite being warned not to go. The Pastoral Epistles date from a time after he was taken prisoner. So, a hypothetical question, could Paul have continued his ministry indefinitely from house arrest in Rome even though his congregations were falling apart and disciples were abandoning him in droves? Yes, he could have. So why did he have to be martyred? Why did Andreas Fischer have to be martyred, and with Fischer the answer is fairly easy to see from 470+ years later: he was beginning to think that outward circumcision was of value, meaning that he didn't really understand the movement of the Law from hand to heart.

Was Paul martyred for a similar reason: he didn't understand that the concept of *clergy* was problematic, and this after all he had written on the subject? But in citing the Law as his authority for saying that the ministry was entitled to support from the laity, Paul disclosed that he really didn't understand the implications and ramifications of everything he had written.

The Pastoral Epistles have far fewer problems than scholars and critics think they have, but this not to say that they are without problems. But they sound much like Armstrong's sermons after he came back from death or near-death: the Pastoral Epistles are attempts to set right what has obviously gone wrong.

As an aside, while tied to the Old Sub Dock at Dutch Harbor in December 1979, after midnight a fellow coming back from UniSea's bar fell into the gap in the dock and had been in the cold water for a considerable length of time before a passerby beat on the top of the cabin of my boat, woke me up, and had me fire up the engine and nose into the gap so the fellow could be pulled out of the water—the fellow was too stiff to move any of his body. Of course, I didn't wait for

the engine to warm up before I moved the boat—and I blew an oil seal. Thus, I began to tear the motor apart to change the seal when a week later I flew out of Dutch and returned to Anchorage where my family was: the motor was apart so I left the boat tied to the Old Sub Dock then caught the Reeves' flight to the big city. And a couple of weeks later the cannery called to tell me that a broken piling had got in my lines and had held the boat down over a tide change, that the boat was filled with water. A person I won't mention then cut the lines and let the boat sink so he could moor his vessel where I moored mine. So by the end of January 1980, I was no longer fishing crab and no longer able to go crab fishing ... a set of circumstances that were purely coincidental? Once I realized that I, personally, had jumped the tracks, were those things that put me back on the track simply happenstance?

In all of my travels, the only geographical location where I have truly felt at home was at Dutch Harbor.

For my purposes, I will assume the Pastoral Epistles are of Paul, but if they are, they constitute the reason why Paul had to be martyred before he damaged his reward in the heavenly realm.

### 3.

Unless a great many Jews and Gentiles became Christians in the mid 1<sup>st</sup>-Century, the so-called *Jesus Movement* would have died the death that has befallen many other upstart movements. But because Jesus was crucified at a time when pagan philosophers were diligently searching for a means to establish worthiness for the soul to go to heaven—this remains the imbedded problem of Islam, hence suicidal *jihad*—Paul's timing couldn't have been better: by preaching Christ and Christ crucified, Paul gave to pagan philosophers the answers they sought. Faith in Jesus provided the *cover* a good person needed to get to heaven. Therefore, without anyone being truly born of God, the *Jesus Movement* caught fire among the Greeks and figuratively scorched the feet of Rome. Critical mass was achieved in what would be historically a surprisingly short period of time. The message of Jesus—His sayings, His words, His miracles—would be preserved until the end of the age even if not a single additional person were truly born of God after mid 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE.

Come to think of it, the above is pretty clever. Christ Jesus' timing could not have been better. If as the Creator-of-all-that-has-been-made He would have entered His creation a decade earlier or much more than a decade later, the *Jesus Movement* would have been lost in other events occurring, and would never have achieved critical mass fast enough to escape Judaism's rebellion against Rome. But because of the apparent exactness of when *YAH* entered His creation as His only Son, even without more than perhaps a couple double handfuls of disciples truly born of spirit, an ideological movement swept the known Western world and became firmly entrenched in the culture of modern man.

God really doesn't make mistakes: the timing of the Jesus' ministry wasn't a historical accident. The time was intended to be what it was. And so to is the timing of this endtime work, which is a return to the work Paul did but without

trying to be all things to all men. I wasn't called to make disciples, but to *reread prophecy* in preparation for the work of the two witnesses.

The 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Body of Christ died with the physical death of the Apostle John (ca. 100–102 CE) as seen in his name that has aspiration occurring in front of the nasal consonant as a representation of physical life—the breath of life coming into the person through the nose. The resurrection of the Body of Christ to life comes when all Christians are filled with and empowered by the spirit of God following the Second Passover liberation of Israel, with this event initiating the seven endtime years of tribulation that denote the transition from the Adversary's present reign over the kingdom of this world to the Son of Man's reign over this same kingdom.

This essay is not complete, but it's long enough that its concepts need to be continued in a new work. So here is where I will end, with memories of Dutch Harbor and Priest Rock undiminished by time—and here is where I will begin the next Endnote about *the Night to be Much Remembered*.

\*

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Ehrman, Bart D., *Jesus Interrupted*. First edition. New York: HarperCollins, 2009.

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