

# *The Cambrian Peshier*

*A Voice of the Desposyni to the Dispersion*

The Peshier for the Holy Innocents, 2025 *vulgaris*  
December 28th, 2028 *Anno Domini*

## **Archetypes & Ecbatic Prophecy**

*For my words are spirit, and they are life.*

- John 6:33

*I was in the spirit on the Lord's day.*

- Revelation 1:10

*The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

- Revelation 19:10

*He that confesseth not . . . This is that spirit of antichrist... even now is it in the world.*

- 1 John 4:3

Beloved Friends:

### **Of My Personal Journey**

This Peshier serves as an important addendum for past *Cambrian Peshiers* in which an effort was made to explain different views of Bible prophecy. Theological terms were introduced which attempted to categorize different schools of eschatology: Preterism, Futurism, Historicism, Idealism, along with others such as Premillennialism, Postmillennialism, and Amillennialism. There is another category which I created to distinguish "apocalypticism" (the traditional fatalistic view popularized by Dispensationalism) from a "soteriological view" (a view based upon open theism).

## **The Soteriological View**

First expressed in my book from the early 1980s (*Hope for Tomorrow: A Rebuttal of Apocalyptic Determinism*), it reflected my personal journey from the eschatology of my childhood exposure to American Fundamentalism, in contrast to my later interaction with the eschatologies of great 19<sup>th</sup> Century leaders, such as the famed evangelist and President of Oberlin College: Charles G. Finney.

Finney, of course, was a Postmillennialist and believed that whatever the Bible meant about the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Christ, it would not - and in fact could not - come to pass unless the Christian Church first finished a global obligation to a thorough and complete fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

I wrote about that in my essays on *The Westward March of Christianity & the Destiny of Nations*. First published serially in my publication "The Family Spokesman," in the 1990s. It was later published as a book in the early 2000s.

## **Discovering Newton and the Preterists**

In the background to all of this research, there languished my personal copy of Sir Isaac Newton's classic, *Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel & St. John of the Apocalypse* (1733), which I retrieved in 1979 from the Special Collections Department of the library at Garrett Theological Seminary and photo-copied. It took me twenty years to understand it. Readers must appreciate that the modern editions of that work so abundant today did not begin to appear until the early 2000s with the first digital copy provided by Dr. Arthur Robinson. Until then, my photo-copy was all I had.

Finney made use of the works of Moses Stuart from Andover, perhaps the preeminent Preterist of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Christian Reconstructionists of the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, such as R. J. Rushdoony (*Thy Kingdom Come*, 1978) and David Chilton (*Paradise Restored*, 1985), did so as well.

But Stuart, coming a century after Newton, stood upon his shoulders and those of his Puritan contemporaries. Jonathan Edwards was a Postmillennialist and just about any Evangelical of consequence thereafter, was as well. As my book on the "Westward March" describes it, it became all entwined with America's perceived Manifest Destiny, and continues to be so unto this day, now on the eve of the nation's sesquicentennial.

My formal theological training, mostly in Fundamentalist institutions, acknowledged, but in the same breath dismissed, these other traditions. Modern Fundamentalists are Futurists and consider it a dangerous heresy to believe in

any of the other schools. Not ever able to reconcile Finney's Postmillennialism with the Futuristic School of my denomination's Statement of Faith, I finally surrendered my credentials in the mid-1980s.

### The Three Languages of Prophecy

Bible prophecies can be further divided according to their literary expressions: 1) **telic** (or specific) prophecy, 2) **conditional** (or covenantal) prophecy and 3) **ecbatic** prophecy (or predictive typology).

Jonah's prediction of the Destruction of Ninevah in "40 days" is an example of *telic* prophecy. Christ's declaration to Jerusalem that "You shall not see me again, until you shall say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'" can be described as *conditional* prophecy.

*Ecbatic* prophecy is probably the dominant form of literary expression in the Bible, certainly Messianic prophecy. Jesus Himself taught in Parables and even His Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24) is laden with parabolic language ("Consider the fig tree", *et al*).

While most theologians freely discuss the role of typology in Bible prophecy, it was L.D. McCabe, a proto-open theist from the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century at Ohio Wesleyan University, who coined the term "ecbatic" because he recognized that a biblical type represented a real historical event or person in the mind of the prophet which then becomes an "archetype" for future and repeated fulfillments:

*"The words so frequently used in the Scriptures, "that it might be fulfilled," very often signify that we have here only another illustration of something uttered on a different occasion; or that the language of Scripture here finds a pertinent application; as we often say, in like cases, "The words of Shakespeare are thus fulfilled," or, "Here is another illustration of the saying so common among us," recognizing at the same time that the event referred to is a mere coincidence. Dr. Nathaniel West writes: "Everywhere through the Scriptures the catastrophes of later date are described in symbolical language drawn from the literal facts of earlier times. For example, Jeremiah describes the ruins of the Jewish state, under Nebuchadnezzar, in terms of Chaos: 'I beheld, and, lo, the earth was without form and void, and the heavens, they had no light.' Isaiah describes it in terms of the Deluge: 'The waters shall overflow your hiding-place.' The language that describes the judgment on Jerusalem portrays the end of the present dispensation." Albert Barnes says that the phrase, "that it might be fulfilled," sometimes means, not that the passage was intended to apply to the particular*

*thing or event spoken of, but that the words do aptly and appropriately express the thing referred to, and may be applied to it. Dr. S. T. Bloomfield says that "this Scriptural expression sometimes means that such a thing so happened that this or that passage would appear quite suitable or applicable to it." Moses Stuart says that "the New Testament writers often use Old Testament phraseology, which originally was applied in a very different connection. And they do this because such phraseology expresses, in an apt and forcible manner, the thought which they desired then to convey."*

- *Divine Nescience & Foreknowledge*, circa. 1897

All of this could have been lifted from the early pages of Newton's *Observations*, as dutifully noted in previous Peshers.

### **What are Peshers?**

Many of these terms can apply to the same prophecies in a layering of application. That is what the word "peshes" is referring to. Any given prophetic book in the Older Testament, such as Jeremiah, for example, might have all three literary forms of prophetic expression:

*The length of the Babylonian Exile was calculated upon the number of sabbatical years neglected by the Israelites. The 70-year exile was computed based upon the 490 years in which the sabbatical years had been violated. Every seventh year was designated as a Sabbath and was an obligation of the Covenant. Here we see that the telic prophecy of Jeremiah was derived from the conditional prophecy of the Covenant.*

- *Merlin: High Priest of the Holy Grail*, Stivers, (2011), p. 100

And as will be explained later, the Sabbath itself is typology.

Biblical commentators are not always consistent and their sleight of hand may not be noticed. They may choose to interpret certain prophecies from the Preterist view (such as the epistles to the literal seven churches in the Book of Revelation) but then the rest of the book they might interpret from the Futuristic view (e.g. the Battle of Armageddon).

The reader is advised to read the many Peshers already published which discuss these various applications at length. What can be called "Newtonian Eschatology" should be noted as the principal resource consulted, but certainly not the only one. R. J. Rushdoony's *Thy Kingdom Come* consists of studies in

Daniel and Revelation that are thematic emanating from a core doctrine of the Covenant. In other words, as an Idealist concerned with the cosmic battle between good and evil, he views prophecy as the path of advancement for Covenant keepers and finds historical parallelisms as proof of it.

### **Typology and the Idealist School**

While all schools of eschatology must engage with the symbolic language of the Bible, “typology” – **especially the notion of the archetype** – is a unique feature of the Idealist School. Newton was known in his day as a Historicist because, as a master of history, he could identify the “fulfillment” of prophecy from the biblical period to at least the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, his view of symbolic language belonged to the notion of the archetype and the “ecbatic” progression of sacred history through time:

*Accordingly, the whole world natural consisting of heaven and earth, signifies the whole world politic, consisting of thrones and people . . . and the things in that world signify the analogous things in this. For the heavens, and the things therein, signify thrones and dignities, and those who enjoy them; and the earth, with the things thereon, the inferior people, and the lowest parts of the earth, called Hades or Hell, the lowest or most miserable part of them.*

– *Observations*, (Anodos Edition, 2019), p. 5

A startling example of this view is Newton’s identification of the “Woman Clothed With the Sun” in Revelation 12 with the “Mother of Harlots” in the later chapters. The Idealist School is not a “liberal” interpretation that reduces biblical imagery into meaningless and vague symbols. Newton saw this form of eschatology in terms of the Divine Covenant and the sanctions of obedience or disobedience to the Covenant which manifest themselves throughout the life of nations. Or as he summarizes,

*While the people of God keep the covenant, they continue to be his people: when they break it they cease to be his people or church, and become “the Synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not” . . . The predictions of things to come relate to the state of the Church in all ages . . . *Observations*, p. 5*

Influenced by Hugo Grotius, Newton believed in the incipiency of the will. Man is capable of choosing righteousness or wickedness. In the case of the Woman Clothed With the Sun becoming Mystery Babylon, the Mother of Harlots, such an outcome is possible because all moral agents are capable of apostasy.

## **Typology and Hermeneutics**

Now, theologians make much of the terms “type” and “antitype” to describe the prophetic significance of symbolic language, especially from the Older Testament. But Jesus taught prophecy in parables, too, and interpreted them for His disciples. We must follow His hermeneutical method.

Revelation has been called the most Old Testament book of the Bible because its symbols are drawn almost exclusively from the Temple service and allusions found in the Hebrew writings. Yet, it is introduced to us as “the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1). Consequently, its typology constitutes the key to understanding the rest of the Bible. If we cannot understand Revelation, then we cannot understand any of it.

### **Why Riddles?**

The practice of using symbolic language and even riddles to convey prophecy is not unique to the Bible. This was standard form among the ancients in virtually all pagan cultures. The shaman or seer never answered the inquirer with a straightforward answer. Instead, he gave a riddle which the recipient was required to decipher, and if he could, then he would be able to interpret the prophecy.

Very often, these riddles required some human ordeal much like a gauntlet in which, should the seeker find the means to meet its criteria, then the desired outcome would come to pass. One surmises that the seeker’s failure would nullify the prophecy.

The use of symbolic language is employed to allow for a very broad range of interpretations to protect the seer or prophet from the charge of error. The label of “false” prophet was certainly one greatly feared by such people as it was not only “bad for business” but it might result in the prophet’s summary execution. The Mosaic Law certainly required it (Deuteronomy 18:22).

### **Typology As Warnings, Not Prophecy**

Typology avoids these kinds of sanctions. The Hebrew prophets employed “typology” to teach God’s moral government through Covenant sanctions.

They used it to establish the archetype, not to anticipate an “antitype.” Most Christian theology is built upon the notion of the future “antitype” when,

contrary to their expectations, all of the antitypes were fulfilled in Christ during the 70 Weeks of Daniel's prophecies which were completed at the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. After that, the archetypes were set in place to provide guidance for us to gauge where we are at in the cycles of Divine providence.

To illustrate what is meant by this contrast would be how the prediction of "the antichrist" is handled by commentators.

Commentators assume a "spirit of the antichrist" which inhabits numerous malevolent historical figures in an anticipation of a one and only future "antichrist" to come. **This is the *type to antitype* sequence.**

What we are offering here is a different point of emphasis: the notion of the archetype of the antichrist comprehended in a single human actor of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century who establishes the profile by which all future antichrists can be known.

**This is the *archetype to type* sequence.**

### **The Archetype as the Language of Covenant Sanctions**

The archetype says that the first type was already the "anti-type" which by becoming the universal "archetype" is from henceforth fulfilled numerous times in future historical parallels. There is no consummation, only coordinates to find our place on the spiritual map of God's created design. This would tend to favor the Idealist view which uses Preterism to establish the yardstick by which society might be measured. Historicism is used to interpret the results of history, to discover what moral choices produced the given consequences.

For example in the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment – within the very stipulations of the Covenant – God tells His people to "remember the sabbath day" because God did His work in six days and rested on the seventh.

God could have chosen any time frame for His work of creation, but in choosing to divide it into six days, with a seventh rest day, He makes His Divine activity the "archetype" which man, being made in the "image" of God, is meant to follow in due course.

The expression of "Weeks and Weeks of Years" figure prominently in delineating periods of worship, marking festivals, sabbatical years, jubilee releases, and other prophetic periods. The prophecies of Daniel are notable for just such prophetic "weeks." The 70 Year Exile from Jeremiah mentioned earlier applies here.

## **A Case Study: Revelation 12**

Another example of the use of archetypes would be a Preterist interpretation of Revelation Chapter 12. A Preterist would say that the “Woman Clothed with the Sun” is a reference to a specific historical person: the Virgin Mary. Her delivered “Son” who ascends to Heaven would be our Lord Jesus Christ.

Many, if not most commentators, embrace this interpretation; it is too compelling to think otherwise. But then they slip from this Preterist point of view and interpret the rest of the chapter from a “spiritualized” and futuristic perspective. When we expect that “the Dragon” and the archangel Michael should refer to real historical persons, because this war is in “heaven,” most commentators then want to suppose some kind of cosmic contest involving unseen supernatural beings. The Dragon is interpreted to refer to “Satan” and in fact, the language of the text seems to demand just such an interpretation because he is described as “that old serpent”, etc. of the Genesis story.

Considering that the “Woman Clothed with the Sun” is also presented as a heavenly being, we then must reconcile that imagery with the humble stable where Jesus was actually born. This explains why some commentators do not believe that this “Woman” is Mary at all, but a symbolic representation of the cosmic church, which then becomes problematic for different reasons, because Jesus was a real historical person, not a cosmic concept. Even Newton, following the Historicist School, makes it about other historical figures, such as Constantine in one rendition and a “Christian empire” in another, while the Woman becomes the Church.

While we agree with Newton’s method, since his time, we have the benefit of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which previous Peshers have established to represent the Ebionite faction who followed James the Just. We find a more satisfactory interpretation by embracing a Preterist View to establish our archetypes.

The Dead Sea Scrolls which share the same symbolic language with Revelation helps us. The target of attack in the Scrolls is the Herodian faction and their contest with the “Teacher of Righteousness” (e.g. The Damascus Document).

Likewise for Revelation 12, a consistent Preterist view would say that Mary becomes the archetype of Zion and her Son, Jesus, becomes the archetype of the Messianic “race” (i.e. “the rest of her offspring”). The astrological language has been shown elsewhere to refer to an astronomical event which pinpoints the time of Christ’s birth to September 11, 4 BC at the time of the evening sacrifice at Rosh Hashana. Such startling information was not available to the Historicists of

Newton's era; otherwise, they would have incorporated it into a refined application. We do not deny that other fulfillments have occurred throughout history; **we are simply insisting that the archetypes were set in place during the Messianic period which ended in 70 AD.**

### **Then, Who is the Red Dragon?**

If we reference the birth story of Jesus, we find that **only King Herod could be this "Dragon"** as it was he who actively sought to have Jesus killed, just as the Dragon in Revelation 12 is waiting to kill the Messiah as soon as he is born. Herod was a real human actor who became the archetype of the Dragon or Satan and the Serpent.

He was represented as a "Red" Dragon because he was a bloody ruler. He slaughtered the innocents of Bethlehem.

But he was also an Edomite (Idumean) and we are taught in the biblical story that the Edomites descended from Esau, who was given the name "Edom" - which means "red" - because he sold his birthright for a mess of red pottage (Genesis 25:27-34).

The Dragon's Seven Heads and Ten Horns signal the Herodian connection to Rome, but it also implicates the Romans as Edomites.

Genetically, if Rome was ever once settled by Phoenician colonizers, like Carthage, then it is possible the Romans were descendants of Esau. The Phoenicians provided the ships but the dwellers of Canaan, which included the Hebrews (maybe the Tribe of Dan) and other neighboring tribes, would have been the passengers. Rabbinic Jews certainly assume as much and have labeled the Romans as Edomites.

Through his power of priestly appointment, Herod had control of the Sanhedrin which pursued Jesus and then later His disciples in numerous attempts at entrapment, persecution and even martyrdom.

### **The Starry Host**

"The third of the starry host" refers to the "one third quorum" (23 of 69) of the Sanhedrin required for rulings of original jurisdiction, often employed in emergency situations or when it was not possible to convene a full Sanhedrin in a given locality. It also served as a rump Sanhedrin when the High Priest wanted to get quick validation for his skullduggery, as in the midnight arrest and trial of Jesus.

The Preterist would say that this is what John the Revelator had in mind when he employed this symbolic language: Mary (Zion), Jesus (the Davidians), and Herod (the rogue Satanists in charge of Judaism).

But what further historical information can be derived from this visionary episode?

The text tells us that this Satan was cast down to the Earth. This would refer to the jurisdictional loss by the Herodian faction of Jerusalem and Judea. Herod Antipas was left with only the tetrarchy of Galilee and Perea (or a one third Sanhedrin), while Pontius Pilate ruled Jerusalem and Judea. Being “cast out of Heaven” meant to lose jurisdiction over Jerusalem – the holy city, and now being “cast to the earth” meant that the Herodians had been reduced to a rulership over “the Earth” of an inconsequential Roman province (recall Newton’s statement cited above).

This Herodian demotion was a political situation which John the Revelator saw intimately; he then adds that “the Serpent” knows “his time is short” because, now having lost his throne in Jerusalem, political forces are at work to further marginalize the Herodian dynasty. It was a process which ultimately ended, per Jesus’ Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24, *et al*), in the final destruction of the nation and the Temple.

### **Who is Michael?**

“Michael” – *the captain of the Lord’s hosts* (Joshua 5:13-15; Daniel 12:1) – would refer to James the brother of Jesus who, although ruling at times from seclusion, nevertheless was the dominant spiritual force in Jerusalem until his martyrdom in 63/64 AD. “Two thirds” of the heavenly Sanhedrin would have been on the side of the “Christians” as attested to in the Acts of the Apostles (6:7; 21:20), and as acknowledged even by their enemies:

*Behold, all Jerusalem is filled with your doctrine.* Acts 5:28

If these verses are meant to describe the immediate political situation in Jerusalem in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century for the first recipients of the Book of Revelation, we might wonder how it becomes prophecy for the future?

We find it in the **rule of the archetype**.

## **The Archetype as Future History**

John the Revelator describes for us a Preterist view, but the Idealist (or Covenantal) view sees these events in terms of the eternal Covenant. These symbols become archetypes for understanding the future precisely because the Covenant is eternal and becomes for us, as Divine sanctions are meted out to Covenant keepers and Covenant breakers, respectively, we find history written in advance. Choices result in predictable outcomes - again and again – as the faithful enforcement of moral law plays out.

### **What about a supernatural being called “Satan”?**

Just because the symbolic language here is meant to refer directly to human actors does not change or nullify the existence of the spiritual realm. It simply recognizes how the genre of the prophetic literature of the time – in this case, the Book of Revelation - belongs to the larger literary corpus from Qumran which is found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. It was the usual practice of the Scrolls to substitute “angelic” or spiritual symbols in place of literal human actors in order to protect the authors from the charge of sedition.

This partly grew from the historical context of the Essene party which by accident found favor in the eyes of the younger Herod the Great before he became king. According to Josephus, he showed promise early in his reign to become a Gentile “Messiah” after the order of King Cyrus of Persia.

### **Writing in Code**

The Essenes benefited from Herod’s favor early on even though they increasingly opposed his rule. Their polemics were crafted in symbolism to prevent discovery. Their seclusion and secretive activities were necessary to their survival. So successful was their duplicity that some historians to this day believe that the “Herodians” described in the Gospels were in fact these Essenes.

Then, on the other hand, the first Christians were also described as the Essenes with an association to the name “Jesus,” even to the point that later church historians, such as Epiphanius from the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, would suppose that lacking the “J” sound in the Greek, “Essenes” would have been “Yessenens” or “Jessenens” in association with “Jesse” or “Jesus”:

*There is much to say about this, but since I have arrived at the topic of why those who believed in Christ were called Jessaeans before being*

*called Christians, we said that Jesse was David's father, and either because of Jesse or because the name of Our Lord Jesus they were called Jessaeans because they stemmed from Jesus . . . The Panarion 29.4.9*

As a Davidian, Jesus would have been connected to the Jewish aristocracy (*ala* Joseph of Arimathea, Mary's uncle), having been enriched from the treasures brought by the Magi and kept out of view of the Herodians for most of His life. He either traveled with this Joseph on his business travels (legend makes him a tin merchant with mines in Britain) or to receive His education in Alexandria, Egypt.

Considering that Nazareth was just a few miles from the Herodian capital of Sepphoris, it would have been impossible for Jesus to have gone unnoticed had He grown up there. The age of apprenticeship was no later than 13 years and we should surmise that soon after His "discovery" in the Temple, He would have been safely dispatched to the care of His uncle before the Temple authorities had time to be making inquests.

### **The Herodians as the First Antichrists**

In identifying the Herodians as the "Satanists" of Revelation 12, it might be worthwhile to explore exactly what made them "satanists."

"Satan" is described here as "the accuser of the brethren" which certainly was true of Saul of Tarsus (a Herodian, cf. Eisenman) before his conversion. Along the lines of a prosecuting attorney or adversarial litigant, such "a satan" seeks to use the legal process as a tool of oppression and murder, which Saul did when he obtained the necessary "writs" to pursue the Christians and imprison them.

This hostility toward Christ's disciples was true of the Herodian party in general, from the time of Herod's interrogation of Christ just prior to His Crucifixion and then later in the slaying of James, the brother of John; after which, intoxicated by his own oratorical power, he indulged the adoration of the people – "he speaks as a god" – only to be smitten by an angel to perish from an infestation of worms: a more inglorious death than can be imagined (Act 12:23)!

Outside of Revelation, such adversaries would be assigned the name of "antichrist" in the Johannine Epistles (1 Jn. 2:18,22, 4:; 2 Jn.7). It is a title which should be distinguished from the notion of a "false" or "pseudo" Christ, as prophesied by Christ Himself in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24, *et al*).

### “Anti” Does Not Mean “Against”

Nor should we fall for the modern error of Greek lexicons which translate “anti” to mean “against” Christ. “Anti” is a Greek prefix which has come to mean “against,” by popular usage but in its **etymology really meant “in the place of.”** An “antichrist” is something put in the place of Christ.

While the pseudo-Christ would refer to either an imposter or a fraudulent Messiah, the latter suggests a “substitution” of something or someone in the place of Christ.

“**Kata**” (Strong’s Lexicon: #2596) is the normal Greek word for being “against” something or someone. If that was what was meant, the text should have read “**Kata-Christos**” not “**Anti-Christos**” if it was intended to describe someone who was against Christ.

John’s Epistles warn his readers that these “antichrists” arose from among the followers of the Way – the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Christians – who now have produced doctrines which replace or substitute the true historical Messiah with a fantasy or cosmic Jesus. They have replaced the original Messianic archetype with a new one.

### The Antichrist Doctrine

“John” reduces the *antichrist* or “anti-messianic” *doctrine* (since there is a “spirit” of the antichrist, which represents “words” that teach a “doctrine” as our opening texts affirm) down to two heretical positions: **1) the denial of a phallic Christ with heirs (“the father and the son”) and 2) the denial of the incarnation (“having come in the flesh”).**

We have already pointed out that the reference to “the father and the son” is to that of a doctrine of succession, specifically primogeniture. It is not meant as an oblique reference to a Trinitarian formula, although it certainly *can* be from inference.

Likewise, the Messianic prophecies required a full incarnation which included the reproductive function (“it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren in all things”- Hebrews 2:16-17). Had Christ lacked the sexual function, then it would have been a partial or incomplete incarnation, not a full incarnation. Per Iranaeus’ Recapitulation Doctrine, if human sexuality was not a part of the Incarnation, then that would have been left out from the scope of redemption in the Atonement (*Hierogamy and the Married Messiah*, Stivers, 2004).

We see these false doctrines embraced later by the Docetists and the Encratites.

In denying primogeniture (the son as heir to the father), the antichrist doctrine seeks to replace the Messianic succession with the doctrine of apostolic succession. It ratifies the same usurpation of the Herodians who sought to exterminate their rivals in the House of David. The apostate church does the same thing by replacing the Seed of the Messiah with a sterile succession of clerics.

Shocking even for the Romans whose historians covered up the crime, Herod manifested his opposition to the Messianic succession by slaughtering the innocents of Bethlehem. Lacking a sacred lineage of his own (he was an Edomite) Herod founded his dynasty upon a performance-based messianism in which he lavishly endowed the Temple to become a messiah after the manner of Cyrus the Great (Isaiah 45:1).

Finally, in rejecting the primogeniture of David's line, Herod attacked that of his own. He was known to kill his wives and his own offspring who did have Davidic blood. Of his non-Davidic sons that survived, they did so because they lived in fosterage at Rome. Ironically, and in the true spirit of Mystery Babylon, Rome was in charge of supplanting the Messianic succession with the Herodian monarchy, a reversal of Jacob with Esau.

As believers in reincarnation, the Herodians did not much care about lineage. Reincarnation is a doctrine of the Greek mystic cults which regards the world of spirits as more important than the material world.

Jesus was fully aware of Herodian duplicity, at one point, calling Herod "that fox" (Luke 13:32). Foxes are predators that operate by stealth. Herodians mingled in the crowds which followed Jesus and often tried to entrap Him.

## The Day of the Slaughter of the Holy Innocents

This year the persecution of Christians in Nigeria has become international news and has solicited military action by the United States to bring relief.

The perpetrators of course deny it, just as Rome expunged the record of Herod's evil atrocity against the babes of Bethlehem.

Whether from political or religious fanaticism, the enemies of truth find they must silence those who speak it. Yet, we must not lose heart; our avenger stands at the door.

A Servant of Jesus,

*James*

### **Collect for the Day:**

*We remember today, O God, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by King Herod. Receive, we pray, into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims; and by your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

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*The Cambrian Peshier* is the pastoral epistle of the Cambrian Episcopal Church of the Grail, a fellowship and abbey adhering to a spiritual tradition from ancient Wales. We use the Authorized Version of the Bible (King James Version) as our default translation and the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopalian Church for liturgical guidance. We are not an affiliate of any denomination.

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