



The Wonder Springs Chronicle

5 December 2007 ; Volume 9, Number 41

The Wonder Springs Chronicle

Contact Information:

Jerry Bannon

Publisher

Wonder Springs

PO Box 1381

Orient, Washington USA 99160

phone: 509.496.5855

blog: www.wondersprings.org email:

jerryb@wondersprings.org

chronicle@wondersprings.org

*©2007; non-commercial education
& forwarding encouraged, please
give a citation credit all other rights
reserved. This work is licensed under
a Creative Commons Attribution-
Noncommercial-No Derivative
Works 3.0 United States License.*

*For past Chronicle archives or to
subscribe to this weekly email please
visit our web site at:
www.wondersprings.org*

Symbiotic economics: Wilderness cries

I will take up a weeping and
wailing for the mountains,

And for the dwelling places
of the wilderness (wildness) a
lamentation,

Because they are burned up,

So that no one can pass through;

Nor can men hear the voice of
the cattle.

Both the birds of the heavens
and the beasts have fled;

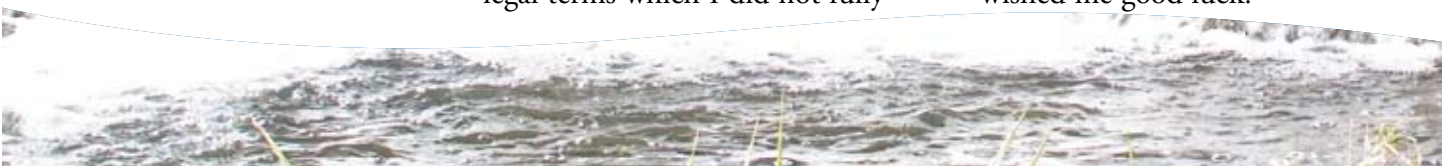
They are gone. *Jeremiah 9:10*

Back in my early days of being
an entrepreneur I was asked to do
some environmental consulting for
a major corporation. In order to do
that work I would have to sign the
company's consulting agreement,
which they said had been prepared
by one of the best legal firms in the
nation, to be fair and honest with
both parties, but still uphold the
requirements of the corporation.

I read over the contract and it
sounded good to me, but within
all the verbiage were a lot of
legal terms which I did not fully

understand. I therefore decided to
take it to my securities lawyer for his
interpretation. Bruce began reading
the multipage document. About
half way through he smiled, wrote
a short sentence on the legal pad
where he always took notes, and
continued reading to the end of the
document.

When he finished reading,
Bruce looked up and stated that
this indeed was a very good and
fair consulting agreement, perhaps
the best he had ever read. Then
he smiled again and brought my
attention to a short paragraph at
the bottom of one of the pages.
The only thing I find wrong with
the document, he said, is that there
should be a comma between, what I
shall call here, this and that. In other
words, it should have read this, and
that. He then went on to explain
without this comma, if litigation
ever was required, he could use that
lack of the comma to justify my
position and we would probably
win. Therefore, he said it was fine
for me to sign the contract and
wished me good luck.



As I read some of my documents that I referenced last week in "Answers? --- What questions?" I was struck with the fact that there was some pretty good stuff written in the articles, but they sure could use some editing, and more than a few commas, between this, and that. That however, was before OSX, at least for me on the MAC. Hence, that was before the computer voice of Kathy would read back to me what I had written. Out of all the stuff these Chronicles have covered over the years, I still find editing the finished work to be the most difficult. Possibly, that is because, I learned most of my writing skills, in the 6th grade, and none of my many educational endeavors hence, have really ever brought a serious improvement. That is truly a frightening concept, when you put it into the context, that in such academic disciplines test scores have continued to erode for all students since the time of that apex.

This may all seem again academic, except for a message I once heard from a preacher. He used the passage from Isaiah 40:3, and found in all four of the gospels where it references the preaching of John the Baptist. Whatever translation the preacher was using however, had punctuated the passage differently than in the gospels. He read the verse as follows: The voice of one crying: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Punctuated in this context, the one crying could be preaching anywhere, it is the wilderness and the desert that makes way for the LORD, God.

Matthew 3:3 gives us the more common rendition: For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'"

So most people would say we are splitting hairs here. If it were a hundred years ago, I would probably agree, but within the context of time, in our 21st century when by definition there is nothing transcendent, then it definitely does make a difference. The first editing makes wilderness and God both transcendent, and the one crying totally human. The second and more common editing has a tendency to make John the Baptist and God on the same level, and the wilderness just a natural (as in naturalism) medium for his discourse.

It is well known that the Hebrew scribes and the early Christian monks who made transcripts of the Holy scriptures, copied the words only, without punctuation. For ease of Bible study the punctuation and the verse numbers themselves have been supplied mostly since the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in 1450. It was that same moveable type printing that reproduced Luther's "95 Theses," which are credited with beginning the Protestant Reformation.

Now when we get to the translations themselves, things also get interesting. While it doesn't directly pertain to this passage, there are two words that are generally translated for valley in our English translations. The first meaning valley, like with the permanent flowing river in the valley, the second valley translation is more appropriately wadi, more equivalent to the Spanish arroyo. Neither have permanent streams, and many times the waters flow in what we would call flash floods. We have valleys in temperate climates, you have wadis and arroyos in the desert.

In contrast with the original two into one translation into our English valley, the opposite is true with the concept of wilderness and desert. We have two words, the original scriptures just one, the Hebrew, "midbar" This makes sense because in Israel, all wilderness is also desert. But more to the point here all midbar are also transcendent. In the New King James version there are 293 references to wilderness and 28 for desert, which shows a hydrated temperate, perhaps non-transcendent understanding for the term.

However, in scripture after His baptism, even Jesus had to spend 40 days in the wilderness before he began His active ministry. Depending upon the source it is believed that the Apostle Paul spent from 3 to 13 years on the back side of the desert of Arabia, and Moses 40 years, before he was ready in God's eyes to lead the children of Israel to the Promised Land. We in contrast believe a weekend retreat, with luxurious hot showers, gourmet meals, an a few hours of warm fuzzy teaching will more than suffice. "Thank you, Jesus. I have been truly inspired in my Christian walk."

Again in the rest of the world, how we define wilderness may not make a huge difference, but in the United States it does, simply because we have a legal definition and a whole set of regulations that set apart true defined wilderness, from the true transcendent wildness of Thoreau. By the American definition all wilderness is wild, but not all wild, or wildness, is

wilderness. Therefore, in the proper context of transcendent creation, we should or could translate all the various passages into the following: The voice of one crying: "In wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the wild a highway for our God."

When you attempt to design wilderness as wilderness you must make some decisions. On the one hand you protect the wilderness area from the rape of exploitive extractive processes, but at the same time you eliminate this part of wild America from the reach of most/many Americans, those who do not have the education, physical ability, or the money to tackle the wilderness adventure on defined restrictive terms. In other words, in the context of last week's green zoos, you have created another, this time in the back country where, by the very nature of wilderness you already have a very limited attendance in the first place.

The American Democracy and the rule of law is truly amazing in this application. In the American wilderness, instead of saying, A, B, and C you can not do, but D, E, & F you can be permitted under these wild guidelines, now essentially no development can be done period. Put into the context of the 21st century, where the Federal Government is creating de-facto wilderness in all of rural America by funding Pork barrel spending with a capital P instead of infrastructure creation and maintenance, and we daily edge closer to the precipitous half-life decay section of the Sin Cosmos curve we looked at last week. Remember half-life decay is not a linear mathematical function, but is logarithmic, so the fall is really like off a cliff rather than a controllable descent.

Perhaps it is appropriate here to mention that I spent a whole quarter in college, discussing in written dialogue with Mr. Gibbons my philosophy professor the role of language in - or - not interpreting reality. For those with nothing better to do with their time, a summary of the awesome, but less than serious, depth of these insights are covered in Philosophy & Science, Early Pre-operation Edition 26 Feb 2003. (<http://www.wondersprings.org/pastarchives/2003pdf/files/preoper2-26-3.pdf>)

The Reformer Martin Luther did a lot of things worth further study, but perhaps there are three areas which still impact our society in a significant way. Without putting these in any context of societal

importance, the three areas are music, human vocations, and God's Word.

Luther believed in the transcendent power of music. Compared to the other reformers, music was a necessary part of his church liturgy. It is reported that the tune of his famous "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," is based on the melody of a gasthan chorus. Music like virtually all that sets humanity apart from the animals, can have no roots in evolutionary dogma, simply because survival of the fittest is a constant struggle, and as such has no place for the praise of simple existence as music. If you add the wonder of purpose and God's redemption, the power and-of praise can be expressed in no other way. From the melody in the heart, other transcendent art forms are generated. "The purest gift is not of gold, but in art that awakens the soul."

The reason that most music and other art today has no transcendent power, is many of the so called artists, are no longer transcendent personalities. Their art is really not art at all, just a means for natural self expression, fame, and fortune. It should be noted also, that transcendence can be either good or evil. Evil, is that word we rediscovered earlier this century, but have yet begun to grasp it's implications. Luther would hold, I believe, that even this faux art or self interest alone, brings glory to God, because everyone, until they have been socially programmed, can tell the difference between artistic genius working in a calling and vain self expression.

Luther emphasized the priesthood of all believers, as the true representation of the church. This means that a person operating in his vocation or calling, are as much priests of God performing the gift of praise and gratitude, as any pastor in his church setting. In other words unbelievers were just as aware of God's grace in a well done job, as they were in a carefully constructed sermon. For His glory alone, God uses ordinary or common means (vocation and callings) to build His church. This more than perhaps any other factor was the reason that western culture became the ideal for the whole world after the Reformation as it still remains. Human good works for the glory of God changed the whole world.

This has been remuddled through revivalism and entropy to mean that to be a good Christian in the work place you need to place tracts on desks and on the urinals and in toilet stalls, and have a Bible study at lunch, preferably with a group of like minded evangelists. This has been so successful throughout the culture that I know

of at least one wantabe green corporation that holds weekly lunch video presentations, to convert those less enthusiastic to the value of the green religion, human caused global warming, and the creation of green zoos as the highest expression of rapidly and positively evolving human society.

To God be all the glory.

Luther's most famous quotation, "Here I stand, I can do no other." is based upon his belief that the Holy Scriptures alone were the sole source and power in human redemption. That is the one absolute truth of all reality. Those Holy Scriptures were written through human instruments, moved by the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring glory to God the Father through the redemptive sacrifice of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That is the transcendent truth of the Bible, it was not created to be a good book of pedantic ethical applications.

There are today those who believe that if we just go back to the basics that made Luther and other reformers teaching so successful in changing the world, it will work again. To a certain extent they are right. However, if God had thought that humanity could continue so enlightened, time would have ended in the 16th century.

Luther began his quest for change essentially because he was disturbed by the sale of indulgences. If you bought an indulgence you could purchase a shorter time in purgatory for yourself, or more importantly a loved one. Everyone in Luther's day believed in God, as a righteous judge of men's sinful deeds, and in the reality of hell and purgatory as punishment for transgression of God's holy law. Mediation came not through the grace of God alone, through faith alone, by Jesus Christ alone, but through the church and what you could do with your resources to alleviate the reality of a Holy God's wrath. Truly an impossible situation in the Reformation view.

As we have pointed out throughout this series, we do not live in medieval Europe, nor do we live in a society in which the true medieval absolute Godly truths have any standing, either in civil, moral, or religious law. Most of the modern church however, possesses a theology not all that different than medieval Rome, except for our modern emphasis on the vanity of self. How can we understand transcendent grace, when transcendence by definition,

does not and can not exist? The answer is just as it was in Luther's day, by the grace of God alone, and to God's glory alone.

Now think for a moment beyond present circumstances, Luther, Calvin and the others had a relatively easy job compared to today. All the Reformers had to do is preach the grace of God into a believing world. Today the job of the priesthood of all believers is to preach not only God's grace, but God's reality in the first place. We must apprehend the realm of God's transcendence, in a world that has done everything within it's power and ingenuity to stamp out God's existence. The only sources of that transcendence of God in this world is God's word, as written transcendent art in the Bible, and visible transcendent art in creation. This in a world which is just barely literate and gets its reality from visual stimulation, from the faux reality of the television, soon to be just LCD, plasma, or DLP. Just as in the vision of the prophet Ezekiel we have a true vision of a valley of dry bones painted in a word picture.

Ezekiel. 37:1-6: The hand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry. And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

So I answered, "O Lord GOD, You know."

Again He said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: "Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the LORD." ' ' "

Soli Deo Gloria