

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and commentary for this week are more in line with what has become usual; for the following will most likely be familiar observations. The concept behind this Sabbath's selection is give up doing what is right in your eyes.

## Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of January 29, 2011*

*The person conducting the Sabbath service should open services with two or three hymns, or psalms, followed by an opening prayer acknowledging that two or three (or more) are gathered together in Christ Jesus' name, and inviting the Lord to be with them.*

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After Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had taken into exile from Jerusalem Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, together with the officials of Judah, the craftsmen, and the metal workers, and had brought them to Babylon, the Lord showed me this vision: behold, two baskets of figs placed before the temple of the Lord. One basket had very good figs, like first-ripe figs, but the other basket had very bad figs, so bad that they could not be eaten. And the Lord said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" I said, "Figs, the good figs very good, and the bad figs very bad, so bad that they cannot be eaten." / Then the word of the Lord came to me: "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles from Judah, whom I have sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans. I will set my eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up, and not tear them down; I will plant them, and not uproot them. *I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.* / But thus says the Lord: Like the bad figs that are so bad they cannot be eaten, so will I treat Zedekiah the king of Judah, his officials, the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who dwell in the land of Egypt. I will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a reproach, a byword, a taunt, and a curse in all the places where I shall drive them. And I will send sword, famine, and pestilence upon them, until

they shall be utterly destroyed from the land that I gave to them and their fathers.” (Jer chap 24 emphasis added)

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*I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord*—that “heart” *to know the Lord* which the Lord will give to the exiles from Judah in Babylon wasn’t given to the remnant that returned with Sheshbazzar after seventy years (that is, in 539 BCE), but will be given to Israel when the Lord makes a new covenant with Israel, not like the covenant He made with the fathers of Israel on the day when He led them by the hand out from Egypt (see Jer 31:31–34). Those *good figs* are not the biological descendants of the ancient house of Judah, but the nation born of God through receipt of a second breath of life—

Jeremiah records, “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will punish all those who are circumcised merely in the flesh—Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart” (9:25–26).

The Apostle Paul wrote,

For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. For *no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.* (Rom 2:25–29 emphasis added)

Circumcision of the heart does not occur until the heart is cleansed by faith; circumcision of the heart is an attribute of the Moab covenant, the covenant made in addition to the covenant made at Horeb (Deut 29:1), the eternal covenant ratified by a song and the covenant that the Apostle Paul called “the righteousness based on faith” (Rom 10:6).

A narrowing occurred: of all Israel that left Egypt and that ate the Passover in Egypt as Moses commanded—thirteen tribes in all (Joseph was represented by two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh)—twelve tribes that were intended to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation to the Lord (Ex 19:5–6) were rejected at Sinai when the sons of Levi were “ordained for the service of the Lord, each [son of Levi] at the cost of his son and of his brother” (Ex 32:29). And because the tribe of Levi, the tribe of Moses and Aaron, was ordained for service to the Lord, the tribe was not numbered in the census of the second year (Num 1:47–49); nor did the tribe receive land as its inheritance when the children of Israel entered the Promised Land.

But even after Levi was selected to be the kingdom of priests, additional narrowing occurred; for after Israel’s rebellion against the Lord in the wilderness of Paran and after the Sabbath-breaker was stoned, Korah of Levi and Dathan and Abiram of Reuben took

chief men chosen by the assembly of Israel and assembled themselves against Moses and Aaron, two brothers of one family of the sons of Levi who had been chosen by the Lord. And Korah told Moses, “You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?” (Num 16:3).

The question has been asked before: what did Korah say that was wrong? Did not the Lord through Moses lead all of Israel, plus a mixed multitude, out from Egypt? Did not the Lord at Sinai tell Moses, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the people of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex 19:3–6).

But the assembly of the Lord ignored that caveat, *if you obey my voice and keep my covenant* ... when Israel rebelled against the Lord, Israel ceased to be a kingdom of priests, but became instead “support” for the tribe of Levi. The dynamics of the Lord’s relationship with Israel changed. And the dynamics would change again after Korah’s rebellion and the grumbling of all the congregation about the rebels’ fate when the earth swallowed them alive (Num 16:41):

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel, and get from them staffs, one for each fathers’ house, from all their chiefs according to their fathers’ houses, twelve staffs. Write each man’s name on his staff, and write Aaron’s name on the staff of Levi. For there shall be one staff for the head of each fathers’ house. Then you shall deposit them in the tent of meeting before the testimony, where I meet with you. And the staff of the man whom I choose shall sprout. Thus I will make to cease from me the grumbings of the people of Israel, which they grumble against you.” Moses spoke to the people of Israel. And all their chiefs gave him staffs, one for each chief, according to their fathers’ houses, twelve staffs. And the staff of Aaron was among their staffs. And Moses deposited the staffs before the Lord in the tent of the testimony.

On the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony, and behold, the staff of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds. Then Moses brought out all the staffs from before the Lord to all the people of Israel. And they looked, and each man took his staff. And the Lord said to Moses, “Put back the staff of Aaron before the testimony, to be kept as a sign for the rebels, that you may make an end of their grumbings against me, lest they die.” Thus did Moses; as the Lord commanded him, so he did.

And the people of Israel said to Moses, “Behold, we perish, we are undone, we are all undone. Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the Lord, shall die. Are we all to perish?” (Num 17:1–13)

*Are we all to perish*—that question was not then answered when Aaron’s staff was chosen.

The people of Israel momentarily realized that they had been rejected. The assembly of the people could decide mundane matters, but could not come near the Lord. There would be no democracy, no republic, no ruling counsel. All communication with the Lord would come through Moses and Aaron, no one else except Aaron's successor, his son Eleazar, and the prophet like Moses that the Lord "will raise up for you ... from your brothers—it is [according to Moses] to him you shall listen" (Deut 18:15).

That prophet is Christ Jesus.

The narrowing that began with the fourth plague, the narrowing that saw all of Israel and believing Egyptians and other peoples leaving Egypt on the night of the 15<sup>th</sup> of *Aviv* prevented half or more of Egypt from coming to the Lord. That narrowing continued at Sinai where sin was made alive so that it could devour the people of Israel, the reason why the sons of Levi were ordained with the shedding of blood, even the blood of their kinsmen; for these sons of Levi had also broken loose and broken the covenant.

The assembly of Israel didn't want to acknowledge the authority invested in Moses by the Lord, who hadn't called Moses to be a king over Israel but the guide [*führer*] that would lead the people to the Promised Land. But as a guide, Moses wasn't chosen by the people but by the Lord—and Moses was chosen even before his birth, before he was placed in a reed Ark and found by Pharaoh's daughter and reared in Pharaoh's household as a son. Moses learned the ways of the Egyptians, their writing and their way of making war and even the ways they worshiped their gods, but when he was mature—about forty—he chose his people, the Hebrews, over the Egyptians. And when he acted upon his choice, slaying the Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew, he became a fugitive and as an outlaw he fled to the land of Midian where he found refuge with the priest of Midian and was content to herd sheep as a sojourner in a foreign land ... where in all of his history had Moses learned of the Lord? The Hebrews in Egypt prayed to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for deliverance, but they defiled themselves with the idols of Egypt (Ezek 20:7–8). So it wasn't from Pharaoh or from the Hebrews in Egypt that Moses learned the ways of God; nor was it from Jethro, his father-in-law and priest of Midian, for he had not circumcised his son born to him of Zipporah (Ex 4:24–26). Moses had not done what Abraham had commanded his offspring throughout their generations to do (Gen 17:9–14).

Moses learned the ways of the Lord directly from the Lord: no one had prepared the way to the Lord for Moses other than the Lord.

Endtime Christians are as the Hebrews were in Egypt in that they have knowledge of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but they have defiled themselves with the idols of this world. They have knowledge of Moses and of Christ Jesus, the prophet like Moses, but they habitually mingle the sacred with the profane and thereby leave themselves defiled and out of covenant, spiritually lifeless and without hope although they, like the Hebrews in Egypt, believe that they serve the Lord when in reality they serve the prince of this world as the Hebrews served Pharaoh.

There are many pious Christians who sincerely desire to serve the Lord and do serve to the limits of their knowledge. They are not, today, to be condemned. However—and this is the caveat they should not ignore—when all of Christendom is liberated from indwelling sin and death at the Second Passover liberation of Israel, all Christians will be filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God so they will no longer have need for

the garment of Christ Jesus' righteousness. They will be well able to cover themselves with their own obedience to God, but because it has not been their habit to keep the commandments and because they sincerely believe they have been serving the Lord as they have been worshiping Him, they will continue to do what they have been doing even though they inwardly know to keep the commandments, especially the Sabbath commandment. They will not repent of their present lawlessness but will continue in it and thereby rebel against the Father and His Christ.

To a lesser degree, pious Sabbatarian Christians will not repent of worshiping the idols they presently worship, with the most terrible of these idols being the audible pronouncement of Jesus' name; thus, these Sabbatarians will condemn themselves when they are filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God *IF* they haven't previously tasted the goodness of God and were cut off from God (John 15:2) when the vine growing from the Root of Righteousness was pruned.

Preaching repentance is not difficult. What is difficult is knowing that all those Christians who do not repent at the Second Passover liberation of Israel will be condemned to the lake of fire—and these Christians are friends and family, neighbors and acquaintances, people known for decades, good people, honorable people, but people who because of their *goodness* will not repent of the way they presently worship the Lord.

There will be a narrowing of Christians following the Second Passover as there was a narrowing of Israel after the first Passover, for the narrow gate through which all who would be saved must pass is the Law, written on hearts and put into minds as a contractual term of the New Covenant (Jer 31:33; Heb 8:10) so that all of *Israel*, circumcised of heart, will *Know the Lord*.

The good figs do not leave Babylon, the single kingdom of this world, until the Second Passover liberation of Israel.

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When Peter and John encountered the beggar at the Beautiful Gate, the day of Pentecost had already past. John the Baptist's ministry had not turned "the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared" (Luke 1:17). Neither had Jesus' earthly ministry. If either John or Jesus had prepared a people for the Lord, there would have been no need for Peter to tell the people at the temple to, *Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out* (Acts 3:19). So John the Baptist could only be a type of the one who would *make ready for the Lord a people prepared* as Moses was a type of Christ Jesus, with Jesus leading sons of God into heaven as Moses and Joshua [in Greek, Ἰησοῦ — *Jesus*] led Israel through the wilderness of Sin and the sons of Israel into God's rest (from Ps 95:10–11).

As John the Baptist preached repentance in preparing *the way of the Lord*, another will come preaching repentance as John preached repentance. But this one who will come does not simply preach repentance, but will cause the *sons of the disciples* to repent by "baptizing" Israel in spirit—the breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ]—thereby liberating the holy ones from indwelling sin and death. This "Israel" will be the nation circumcised of heart, and this one who will come is the last Elijah, of whom John the Baptist was a type; for this one to come does indeed turn "the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared" (Luke 1:17).

Before the children of Israel entered into the Promised Land, Moses warned them, “You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, everyone doing what is right in his own eyes” (Deut 12:8) ... apparently Moses had tired of trying to end Israel’s idolatry, and had let the people have their own way in some matters. But the children of Israel did not long heed Moses’ warning: the Book of Judges records,

There was a man of the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Micah. And he said to his mother, “The 1,100 pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse, and also spoke it in my ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it.” And his mother said, “Blessed be my son by the Lord.” And he restored the 1,100 pieces of silver to his mother. And his mother said, “I dedicate the silver to the Lord from my hand for my son, to make a carved image and a metal image. Now therefore I will restore it to you.” So when he restored the money to his mother, his mother took 200 pieces of silver and gave it to the silversmith, who made it into a carved image and a metal image. And it was in the house of Micah. And the man Micah had a shrine, and he made an ephod and household gods, and ordained one of his sons, who became his priest. In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (Judges 17:1–6)

The story of Micah wasn’t limited to just Micah, but extended to all of the sons of Israel, even the sons of Levi:

Now there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there. And the man departed from the town of Bethlehem in Judah to sojourn where he could find a place. And as he journeyed, he came to the hill country of Ephraim to the house of Micah. And Micah said to him, “Where do you come from?” And he said to him, “I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to sojourn where I may find a place.” And Micah said to him, “Stay with me, and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year and a suit of clothes and your living.” And the Levite went in. And the Levite was content to dwell with the man, and the young man became to him like one of his sons. And Micah ordained the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah. Then *Micah said, “Now I know that the Lord will prosper me, because I have a Levite as priest.”* (Judges 17:7–13 emphasis added)

Does not every Christian doing what is right in his or her own eyes reflect the state of Christendom today? Does not a similar situation exist in the Church today? Are not sects and denominations making for themselves priests and ministers, ordaining young and old men who agree with the ideology of the household, paying their priests and ministers a stipend as Micah promised to pay the young Levite? It is not the Lord who pays Catholic priests or Methodist pastors, for these priests and pastors are employees of the men [or women] who sign their paychecks. They teach what is approved by the sect or denomination. So a Messianic Jew who pastors the German Seventh Day Baptist Church in New Salem as well as a Sunday-observing church in Loysburg, Pennsylvania,

preaches to each congregation what it wants to hear instead of preaching repentance to both.

But what was the outcome of Micah making for himself a priest, Jonathan the son of Gershom, son of Moses?

In those days there was no king in Israel. And in those days the tribe of the people of Dan was seeking for itself an inheritance to dwell in, for until then no inheritance among the tribes of Israel had fallen to them. So the people of Dan sent five able men from the whole number of their tribe, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land and to explore it. And they said to them, "Go and explore the land." And they came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and lodged there. When they were by the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young Levite. And they turned aside and said to him, "Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What is your business here?" And he said to them, "This is how Micah dealt with me: he has hired me, and I have become his priest." And they said to him, "Inquire of God, please, that we may know whether the journey on which we are setting out will succeed." And the priest said to them, "Go in peace. The journey on which you go is under the eye of the Lord." / Then the five men departed and came to Laish and saw the people who were there, how they lived in security, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and unsuspecting, lacking nothing that is in the earth and possessing wealth, and how they were far from the Sidonians and had no dealings with anyone. And when they came to their brothers at Zorah and Eshtaol, their brothers said to them, "What do you report?" They said, "Arise, and let us go up against them, for we have seen the land, and behold, it is very good. And will you do nothing? Do not be slow to go, to enter in and possess the land. As soon as you go, you will come to an unsuspecting people. *The land is spacious, for God has given it into your hands, a place where there is no lack of anything that is in the earth.*" / So 600 men of the tribe of Dan, armed with weapons of war, set out from Zorah and Eshtaol, and went up and encamped at Kiriath-jearim in Judah. On this account that place is called Mahaneh-dan to this day; behold, it is west of Kiriath-jearim. And they passed on from there to the hill country of Ephraim, and came to the house of Micah. / Then the five men who had gone to scout out the country of Laish said to their brothers, "Do you know that in these houses there are an ephod, household gods, a carved image, and a metal image? Now therefore consider what you will do." And they turned aside there and came to the house of the young Levite, at the home of Micah, and asked him about his welfare. Now the 600 men of the Danites, armed with their weapons of war, stood by the entrance of the gate. And the five men who had gone to scout out the land went up and entered and took the carved image, the ephod, the household gods, and the metal image, while the priest stood by the entrance of the gate with the 600 men armed with weapons of war. And when these went into Micah's house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household gods, and the

metal image, the priest said to them, “What are you doing?” And they said to him, “Keep quiet; put your hand on your mouth and come with us and be to us a father and a priest. *Is it better for you to be priest to the house of one man, or to be priest to a tribe and clan in Israel?*” And the priest’s heart was glad. He took the ephod and the household gods and the carved image and went along with the people. / So they turned and departed, putting the little ones and the livestock and the goods in front of them. When they had gone a distance from the home of Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah’s house were called out, and they overtook the people of Dan. And they shouted to the people of Dan, who turned around and said to Micah, “What is the matter with you, that you come with such a company?” And he said, “You take my gods that I made and the priest, and go away, and what have I left? How then do you ask me, ‘What is the matter with you?’” And the people of Dan said to him, “Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest angry fellows fall upon you, and you lose your life with the lives of your household.” Then the people of Dan went their way. And when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his home. (Judges 18:1–26 emphasis added)

Israel at Sinai had condemned itself for making a metal image: “Then the Lord sent a plague on the people, because they made the calf, the one that Aaron made” (Ex 32:35). And a new provision was added to the second Sinai covenant: “You shall not make for yourself any gods of cast metal” (Ex 34:17). Nevertheless, Micah stole from his mother and set off a chain of events that resulted in a tribe being eliminated from Israel:

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:

12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed,  
12,000 from the tribe of Reuben,  
12,000 from the tribe of Gad,  
12,000 from the tribe of Asher,  
12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali,  
12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh,  
12,000 from the tribe of Simeon,  
12,000 from the tribe of Levi,  
12,000 from the tribe of Issachar,  
12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun,  
12,000 from the tribe of Joseph,  
12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed. (Rev 7:1–8)



The tribe of Dan is missing from the listed servants of the Lord; for the entire tribe of Dan had complicity in setting up Micah's graven image as its god and in making a son of Moses its priest for as long as the house of God was at Shiloh (Judges 17:31).

The narrowing of Israel was an ongoing process; for as the people who initially went with Gideon were too many for the Lord to give the Midianites into their hand—the people would think that they had secured the victory by their own might—the people of Israel were too many to be a kingdom of priests for the Lord. Then the sons of Levi were too many to serve in the temple of God; so the sons of Zadok, priest to King David, will keep charge of the Lord's sanctuary in the Millennium (Ezek 44:15). They alone shall stand before the Lord to offer sacrifice

Sabbatarian Christians became too many in the 19<sup>th</sup>-Century for the Lord to use all of them to preach repentance to greater Christendom; for the will of these Sabbatarians was to “convert” heathens, to bring the uncalled into covenant with God, and to let Christians in other denominations alone. A narrowing took place, a narrowing through revelation in the first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup>-Century, a narrowing through understanding that in addition to keeping the weekly Sabbath, Christians were to keep the annual Sabbaths of God, especially the Passover.

As the sin of Micah led to an entire tribe of Israel being eliminated from service to God, the unbelief of Ellen G. White led to a narrowing of Sabbatarian Christians called by God to prepare the way for the Lord to come again as the King of kings and Lord of lords—

From the late 1920s through the 1950s, Herbert W. Armstrong preached repentance to North American Christendom: using fear and his advertising experience, Armstrong frightened Christians, causing them to at least temporarily repent of their lawless ways and turn to God, blowing dust off their Bibles, but again, there quickly became too many Sabbatarians for God to use them all to prepare the way for the Lord. A narrowing had to occur. And that narrowing came when Armstrong rejected additional prophetic understanding in January 1962.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the former Worldwide Church of God expected an imminent three-and-a-half-year-long period of tribulation and great tribulation, from which members of the church would be spared by the Lord taking them to a physical place of safety, a place of final training. Obviously, what was preached did not happen; for the entirety of the organization was without any prophetic understanding. Although the organization preached repentance somewhat successfully, bringing many to obedience, the organization *excused* their prophetic failure by blaming its members, saying that *the Church* was simply not ready for Christ's return ... the entire premise behind a place of final training is that *the Church* will not be ready for Christ's return when their half-scale Tribulation began; so neither the organization's logic nor its prophetic explications were well considered. The organization had about it the naivité of a child, which theologically, it was. But in blaming its members for delaying Christ Jesus' return, it was not unique.

Repentance precedes Christ Jesus' return, but again, this repentance comes through *restoring all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets long ago*. And if God spoke of this *restoring all things* long before the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE, then God wasn't giving the sons of the prophets, the sons of the disciples much say in when

and how all things would be restored. This restoration of all things would come at a preset time, just as “the people of Israel lived in Egypt ... 430 years. At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt” (Ex 12:40–41). And this restoration would not be dependent upon whether an assembly of holy ones was ready—

Was Israel in Egypt ready to leave Egypt when the tenth plague occurred? Had Israel repented of its unbelief? The prophet Ezekiel records,

In the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the Lord, and sat before me. And the word of the Lord came to me: “Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God, Is it to inquire of me that you come? *As I live, declares the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you.* Will you judge them, son of man, will you judge them? *Let them know the abominations of their fathers, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: On the day when I chose Israel, I swore to the offspring of the house of Jacob, making myself known to them in the land of Egypt; I swore to them, saying, I am the Lord your God. On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands. And I said to them, Cast away the detestable things your eyes feast on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against me and were not willing to listen to me. None of them cast away the detestable things their eyes feasted on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. /* Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt. So I led them out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. I gave them my statutes and made known to them my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live. Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them. (Ezek 20:1–12 emphasis added)

The Lord did not wait until Israel in Egypt repented before He brought that nation out from the geographical representation of sin. Rather, he took the fathers of Israel by the hand and led the nation out from Egypt, making with them on *that day* the Passover covenant (Ex 12:43–13:2), the first covenant (Heb 8:9; Jer 31:32) to which more would be added after the commandments brought sin to life so that it could devour the nation at Sinai (*cf.* Rom 7:7–10; Ex chap 32).

The Lord, after He had delivered Israel into the hand of the Assyrians [ca 721 BCE] then into the hand of the Chaldeans a little more than a century later, would not tolerate inquiry from the captive *sons of the prophets*. All the Lord would permit is for the son of Adam to judge Israel, with Christ Jesus being the Son of Man to whom all judgment has been given (John 5:22). ... Theologically, Israel in captivity, after being a free people to

worship the Lord as He commanded, was “dead” as Christians will be dead when condemned to the lake of fire. The parallelism holds that Jacob and his twelve sons in the land of Canaan equates with Jesus and His twelve disciples in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE. When Jacob and his sons enter Egypt, they enter into death, with slavery forming a type of death that has the fleshly body remaining alive but the inner self being dead through not being free to come and go as its wishes, nor free to worship God as God commands. Thus, enslaved Israel in Egypt, in type, represents the greater Christian Church once the Holy Spirit is lost with the death of the Apostle John, the last of the first disciples: the Christian Church “died” with John, but lived physically as Israel in slavery dwelt in Egypt, making bricks for Pharaoh. Hence, Moses’ escape from slavery first by being reared in Pharaoh’s house as a son, then altogether from Egypt as a fugitive, in type, represents the last Elijah laying over the dead Body of Christ and breathing His breath [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ] into this cold corpse beginning in the 16<sup>th</sup>-Century CE in figurative mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Therefore, Sabbatarian Anabaptists today are represented by Moses in that they are not enslaved to sin and death but live as fugitives from sin, not as conquerors and victors, whereas greater Christendom is, in type, represented by enslaved Israel in Egypt. And as the Lord did not wait until Israel in Egypt repented of its adoption of Egyptian idols before liberating the nation but only waited until Moses had dwelt forty years as a fugitive in the land of Midian, the Lord will not wait for greater Christendom to repent of its lawless ways before bringing Christians out from sin through a Second Passover liberation.

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Things didn’t go well for the people of Israel in the Promised Land after Joshua died:

The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian seven years. And the hand of Midian overpowered Israel, and because of Midian the people of Israel made for themselves the dens that are in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds. For whenever the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. They would encamp against them and devour the produce of the land, as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel and no sheep or ox or donkey. For they would come up with their livestock and their tents; they would come like locusts in number—both they and their camels could not be counted—so that they laid waste the land as they came in. And Israel was brought very low because of Midian. And the people of Israel cried out for help to the Lord.

When the people of Israel cried out to the Lord on account of the Midianites, the Lord sent a prophet to the people of Israel. And he said to them, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of bondage. And I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you and gave you their land. And I said to you, ‘I am the Lord your God; you shall not fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.’ But you have not obeyed my voice.” (Judges 6:1–10)

In the American Southwest, there were a people living as Israel in the Promised Land lived when the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord: these people were the Anasazi, the ancient ones, the ancient Pueblo People who dwell under cliffs and in holes dug high on cliff faces where they could escape an enemy they apparently could not defeat in open combat, an enemy that was cannibalistic.

When the people of Israel, with no king in the land and every person doing what was right in his or her own eyes, could bear the burden of their evil ways no longer, *the people of Israel cried out for help to the Lord*. And the Lord sent them a prophet who preached to them repentance, which wasn't exactly what they expected.

But consider how far the people of Israel were from the Lord:

That night the Lord said to [Gideon], "Take your father's bull, and the second bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Baal that your father has, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it and build an altar to the Lord your God on the top of the stronghold here, with stones laid in due order. Then take the second bull and offer it as a burnt offering with the wood of the Asherah that you shall cut down." So Gideon took ten men of his servants and did as the Lord had told him. But because he was too afraid of his family and the men of the town to do it by day, he did it by night. / When the men of the town rose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was broken down, and the Asherah beside it was cut down, and the second bull was offered on the altar that had been built. And they said to one another, "Who has done this thing?" And after they had searched and inquired, they said, "Gideon the son of Joash has done this thing." Then the men of the town said to Joash, "Bring out your son, that he may die, for he has broken down the altar of Baal and cut down the Asherah beside it." But Joash said to all who stood against him, "Will you contend for Baal? Or will you save him? Whoever contends for him shall be put to death by morning. If he is a god, let him contend for himself, because his altar has been broken down." Therefore on that day Gideon was called Jerubbaal, that is to say, "Let Baal contend against him," because he broke down his altar. (Judges 6:25-32)

The people of Israel were willing to kill Gideon for having destroyed an idol ... are Christians today willing to *kill*, at least figuratively, anyone who tears down one of their idols? How about the Trinity, that pagan assignment of personhood to the breath of God? Will Christians in the greater Church fight for their triune deity that is no deity at all, but a *baal* to be destroyed?

Or better, will Christians fight to return constitutional governance to the United States of America? If they do, they will be directly fighting against God who would save them if they would believe Him.

When the people are the author of the *authorities superior* to which Christians are to submit, the people collectively represent the legal firstborn son of the nation state, a concept indirectly addressed when the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon:

Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of

the Lord appeared to him and said to him, “The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor.” And Gideon said to him, “*Please, sir, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us, saying, ‘Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?’* But now the Lord has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian.” And the Lord turned to him and said, “Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?” And he said to him, “Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.” And *the Lord said to him, “But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man.”* (Judges 6:10–16 emphasis added)

Where are the miracles that Jesus did? That John and Peter did? That Paul did? We have heard of these miracles as Gideon had heard of the Lord bringing Israel out from Egypt, but endtime Sabbatarians are oppressed by the world. As employers have an increasingly large pool of surplus labor from which to choose employees, Sabbatarians find it increasingly difficult to obtain work that doesn't require “occasionally” transgressing the Sabbath. Sabbatarians are being pushed into niche holes where as owner-operators they eke out marginal livings, the way it has traditionally been for all who would obey God, seeking first the kingdom of heaven.

But it is as one man that authority is held either by the people or over the people: Moses did not share authority with the assembly of the Lord as Korah and his friends learned. The kings of Israel did not share authority over Israel; Samuel did not share authority until the people asked for a king ... the people could not make a king for themselves without receiving permission to do so from the Lord, for the people of Israel were not to be like other nations. Whereas the Midianites and the Amalekites made kings for themselves, the people of Israel were ruled indirectly by the Lord through the judges that as one man represented the bridge between the Lord and the people.

Today, Christians do whatever is right in their own eyes, and they do what is evil in the sight of the Lord—and the Lord has delivered the Church into the hand of the spiritual king of Babylon for good, not for evil. For in death [that is, by being spiritually dead], the people of God are not condemned for their lawlessness, by their transgression of the Sabbath commandment, by their mingling of the sacred with the profane. Christians can live as Gentiles, and not condemn themselves to the lake of fire. They can participate in worldly politics and not condemn themselves. And when they are the author of the *authorities superior* to which they submit, they formalize doing what is right in their own eyes.

But again, when the people hold *auctoritas principis* they are collectively the firstborn of the nation and they will collectively die when all uncovered firstborns are slain at the Second Passover liberation of Israel. For their own protection, the people must have a single individual take from the people the authority of the people to rule themselves. If not a single individual, then a small party of individuals that hold *auctoritas principis*.

Presently, a movement of conservative television and radio political pundits and a great many patriotic citizens are attempting to return the bloated Federal Government to its constitutional limits ... if these patriots are successful—they will not be—then fewer

Americans will be left alive on the morning after the Second Passover liberation of Israel than there are Chinese left alive, and there will be very few Chinese left alive. Thus, since the Lord does not have plans to tear down farther the people of God but to bring them out from Babylon to rebuild heavenly Jerusalem, what will be seen is that the people of the United States will cease being their own sovereign, which has already effectively happened ... when the executive branch of the Federal Government rules by decrees [Executive orders] and through regulatory czars and recess appointments, the people have really lost *auctoritas*. The forthcoming fight between the people and their representatives against a would-be *pharaoh* and his czars needs to be, and will be lost by the people, which is akin to what the prophet Jeremiah told the Israelites in Jerusalem:

[The Lord told Jeremiah] And to this people you shall say: “Thus says the Lord: Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death. He who stays in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, but he who goes out and surrenders to the Chaldeans who are besieging you shall live and shall have his life as a prize of war. For I have set my face against this city for harm and not for good, declares the Lord: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.”

(Jer 21:8–10)

The prophet Jeremiah was continually accused of preaching sedition, but in Jeremiah setting before Israel the way of life and the way of death, with the way of life being surrender to the Chaldeans—the king of Babylon—odd dynamics were set into play: to live meant going to slavery, which foreshadows dying spiritually; whereas the Israelite who remained in Jerusalem, who suffered famine and pestilence and death by the sword does not go into slavery and never submits to the king of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar forms the shadow and copy of the spiritual king of Babylon (Isa 14:4); thus an Israelite surrendering to the Chaldeans typologically represents a Christian surrendering to the Adversary ... does God desire Christians to surrender to Satan in order to save their physical lives at the cost of condemnation of their inner spiritual lives in the lake of fire? That hardly seems right; so there must necessarily be extenuating circumstances not easily discerned.

It is true that lawless Israel in Jerusalem [the house of Judah and displaced refugees from the house of Israel] typologically represent lawless Christians in heavenly Jerusalem, where the temple will be measured and the court outside the temple is given over to the nations [Gentiles] for forty-two months (Rev 11:1–2), with the unit of time [*months* as opposed to *days* or *times*] disclosing that this Jerusalem is indeed in heaven and the nations that overrun the outer court have life in the heavenly realm, or indwelling spiritual life—

When the Second Passover liberation of Israel occurs, every Christian regardless of sect or denomination or creed will be filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God; every Christian will be baptized in spirit; every Christian will be a son of God, with real life in that portion of the heavenly realm that is in the Abyss. Every Christian, upon demonstrated obedience, will be measured as part of the temple of God, the altar, and those that worship there. However, the Christian—equally filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God as the Christian who demonstrates obedience—who rebels against God

is outside the temple as part of the nations that overrun and trample the holy city throughout the ministry of the two witnesses (Rev 11:3).

With earthly Jerusalem in the days of king Josiah and his sons Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim [formerly, Eliakim], and his grandson Jehoiachin, and Jehoiachin's uncle, Mattaniah [the king of Babylon changed his name to Zedekiah] representing in type the holy city of Jerusalem during the Affliction, from just before the Affliction begins until the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man, what's seen in the person of Jeremiah is the holy ones [the saints] who have been measured inside the temple.

When the people do what is right in their own eyes, they rebel against God and do what is evil.

When Christians do what seems right to them, they rebel against God and do what is evil, calling good *evil* and evil *good*. But let the Adversary contend for himself: he needs no help from saints. For in one person who is larger than a person, the Lord will again preach repentance to Israel, the nation circumcised of heart.

In type, the Second Passover liberation of Israel is seen in,

And Samuel said to all the house of Israel, "If you are returning to the Lord with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from among you and direct your heart to the Lord and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." So the people of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and they served the Lord only. (1 Sam 7:3-4)

The basis for confrontation with those who will support the man of perdition is complete: the man of perdition will lead an ill-considered charge to return to the people of a nation state, of every nation state *auctoritas principis*. This man of perdition will renounce violence until he has the means to use violence as a tool to compel all to believe the tenets of Arian Christendom.

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*The person conducting the Sabbath service should close services with two hymns, or psalms, followed by a prayer asking God's dismissal.*

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