

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 the legs of iron of prophecy.

## **Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of February 28, 2009**

*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.*

From the Reading for February 28, 2009: *The iron legs do not—and have never—represented the Roman Empire or the Roman Church. The whore that rides the beast is not the Roman Church, for the king of the North will overrun the king of the South just before he is taken and dealt a death blow. But this is for next Sabbath.*

The humanoid image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in vision has, below the loins, two iron legs and feet ... iron is a gray metal, approximately the color of lightly oxidized silver—and like silver, it will turn dark from oxidation before turning red with rust. But when polished, iron is nearly as bright as silver, but when alloyed with carbon (it's almost impossible to smelt iron without producing an iron-carbon alloy) iron is much harder, much stronger than silver or bronze. And for those who don't know, when heated iron responds the way gold does: heat spreads rapidly through a piece of silver, less rapidly through bronze, but heat remains localized when working gold and only slowly spreads throughout the piece. Likewise, heat remains localized when working iron (less so than with gold but certainly in a more controllable manner than in silver). So though iron looks like silver, it works like gold, and unless alloyed with carbon, it is soft and cannot be hardened.

Within Christendom, the perception exists that the iron legs of Nebuchadnezzar's image are hardened steel, the teeth of hydraulic car crushers, unbreakable, devouring, destroying, but these iron legs are as easily crushed and broken as the gold head, silver chest, and bronze belly; for the kingdom of heaven "shall break in pieces all of these kingdoms and bring them to an end" (Dan 2:44) ... at one time, in one moment, the kingdom of heaven shall break the gold kingdom, the silver kingdom, the bronze kingdom, the iron kingdom, and the iron and clay kings; so of necessity, all of these kingdoms co-exist at the time when "a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand" and this stone "broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold" (v. 45).

One kingdom doesn't break the preceding kingdom only to be broken by a following kingdom, with the kingdom of the Son of Man smashing the mingled iron and clay toes. Rather, all of the metal kingdoms are broken at the same time: Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar, "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed" (2:44) ... *those kings*, what kings? The ten toes? This is how the prophecy is traditionally read, but if this were the best reading, why is the bronze, silver, and gold present when the iron and clay toes are broken in pieces?

*Those kings* are the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold kings. All of them are present and reigning over the earth as the Son of Man will reign over the earth when the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Father and His Christ (Rev 11:15). *Those kings* include the ten toes, a mixed rulership of human beings who have not been glorified and demonic spirits—and as miry clay cannot be welded to iron, these human rulers, while supporting and worshiping demons, will not stay joined with demons, for these human beings will truly believe that they are worshiping the Most High. When they realize they are not, they will pull away from the demons, but it will be too late for them for they will have taken sins back inside themselves. Just as ancient Israel in the wilderness of Paran realized that the nation had sinned against the Lord (Num 14:40), the human rulers—clergymen—who joined with the demons will repent, but it will be too late for them.

How can it be too late to repent? Surely a loving God would accept the repentance of anyone who turns to Him ... is there a limit to the Lord's patience?

Moses records,

And the Lord said to Moses, "How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they." (Num 14:11–12)

But Moses said to the Lord, "Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for you brought up this people in your might from among them, and they will tell the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that you, O Lord, are in the midst of this people. For you, O Lord, are seen face to face, and your cloud stands over them and you go before them, in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. Now if you kill this people as one man, then the nations who have heard your fame will say, 'It is because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land that he swore to give to them that he has killed them in the wilderness.' And now, please let the power of the Lord be great as you have promised, saying, 'The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and the fourth generation.' Please pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have forgiven this people, from Egypt until now." (vv. 13–19)

Then the Lord said, *“I have pardoned, according to your word. But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, shall see the land that I swore to give to their fathers. And none of those who despised me shall see it.* But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me fully, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it. Now, since the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valleys, turn tomorrow and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea.”  
(vv. 20–25 emphasis added)

The Lord’s judgments are final. There is no appeal of His considered judgment. When the people acknowledged that they had sinned—when they repented—the judgment did not change: they would die in the wilderness, and none of them except for Caleb and Joshua entered into Canaan, God’s rest, because of unbelief (Heb 3:19) ... Moses entered into God’s rest when he entered in the Lord’s presence (Ex 33:14), for entering into God’s rest is a euphemistic expression for entering into God’s presence. Every disciple born of spirit is a son of God, and every disciple takes with him into God’s presence his tent of flesh when he keeps the Sabbath on seventh day; the disciple bodily enters into God’s rest through Sabbath observance as the children of ancient Israelites entered into the land of Canaan when they followed Joshua/Jesus [in Greek, both are written as Ἰησοῦ — see Acts 4:10; 7:45] across the Jordan.

Moses only gets Israel to the plains of Moab where life and death is placed before the mixed (circumcised and uncircumcised) children of Israel (see Deut chaps 21–32). A choice must be made: remain where one is on the figurative plains of Moab, the choice rabbinical Jewish has made, or follow Ἰησοῦ into God’s rest. For the Gentile who truly believes that Ἰησοῦ is the Lord and that the Father raised Ἰησοῦ from the dead, the Gentile will now entered into Sabbath observance, keeping the commandments by faith and having outward uncircumcision being “covered” by inward circumcision of the heart. For the natural Israelite who has kept the commandments from his or her youth as the rich young ruler had (Luke 18:18–21), the journey of faith necessary to cleanse the heart is accepting that Ἰησοῦ is Lord and that the Father raised Him from the dead. Thus, the Gentile convert who initially believed that Jesus is Lord and the natural Israelite who kept the commandments since his youth—or the natural Israelite, who, when in a far land, turned to God and began to keep the commandments (Deut 30:1–2)—will together follow Ἰησοῦ across a figurative Jordan when the Gentile keeps the commandments and the Jew professes that Jesus is Lord ... the Lord did not, by chance, cause Moses to change the name of Hoshea son of Nun to “Joshua” (Num 13:16), nor was it by happenchance that the angel Gabriel told Mary to name the Son of God Ἰησοῦ (Luke 1:31). Those disciples who have swallowed the poisonous sacred names heresy use a bastardized Hebrew pronunciation of *Joshua* as the linguistic icon by which they identify the man Jesus, who has a new name that no one knows (Rev 19:12), little realizing that Jesus’ first language was not Hebrew but Aramaic, that Jesus was

from “Galilee of the nations” or “Galilee of the Gentiles” (Isa 9:1), that most likely Greek would have been the second language Jesus spoke and Hebrew His third language. Certainly Greek was the *lingua franca* of His age, a hybridized language that allowed commerce to be carried on across peoples and cultures. And the gospel [good news] about Jesus was not taken to Gentile peoples in Hebrew or Aramaic, but in Greek—it was, from the days of Moses, intended to initially go to the Gentiles in Greek ... today, English is the *lingua franca* in which the endtime gospel that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13) is taken to the world.

Of the men numbered in the census of the second year, only Joshua and Caleb crossed the Jordan. The nation that left Egypt was replaced virtually man for man by their children (*cf.* Num 1:46; 26:51), with those born in Egypt being circumcised and those born in the wilderness being uncircumcised ... the chiral image of this replacement of Israel, man for man, will occur during the first 1260 days of the Tribulation. The spiritual nation of Israel that leaves sin/Egypt will rebel against God as Israel rebelled in the wilderness of Paran, with this rebellion seen in Scripture as the great falling away (2 Thess 2:3) that occurs when the lawless one is revealed, and the nation that rebels will be replaced man for man by its “children,” not physical offspring but spiritual offspring, with these offspring circumcised of heart and not circumcised of heart prior to figuratively crossing the Jordan and entering into God’s rest/presence when the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Father and His Christ. The remnant of the Woman’s offspring (Rev 12:17) and the 144,000 that follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Rev 14:1–5), together, represent the reality foreshadowed by the children of natural Israel crossing the Jordan, approximately 601,000 in number.

With the children of Israel were the mixed multitude and their children (Gentiles) that left Egypt with Israel, their number not recorded in Scripture although the reality that this mixed multitude foreshadowed is seen: “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing beside the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands” (Rev 7:9). This reality is also seen in Zechariah:

In the whole land, declares the Lord,  
two thirds shall be cut off and perish,  
and one third shall be left alive.

And I will put this third into the fire,  
and refine them as one refines silver,  
and test them as gold is tested.

They will call upon my name,  
and I will answer them.

I will say, “They are my people”;  
and they will say, “The Lord is my God.” (13:7–8)

This third part of humankind—all who endure to the end and are thus saved (Matt 24:13)—constitute the great multitude that cannot be numbered ... this great multitude do not represent those who have been drawn from this world prior to the liberation of Israel from indwelling sin and death, for those who were before sons of disobedience have been made into Jews through circumcision of

the heart (see Rom 2:28–29), whereas natural Jews who are circumcised only in the flesh are no longer counted by God as *Jews*, or Israel. Therefore, it is those who are born of spirit prior to the beginning of the Tribulation that are as ancient Israel was in Egypt.

Note the preceding: there are more sons of God through receipt of the Holy Spirit than there are Sabbatarian disciples, and there are more Sabbatarian disciples than there are Sabbatarian sons of God ... not all who claim to be Christians are truly Christian; not all who claim to be born of spirit have truly been so born; not all Sabbatarian Christians are either Christian or born of spirit. However, all who have been truly born of spirit (with some keeping the Sabbath and with some trapped in Sunday observance) will be liberated from indwelling sin and death when the death angel again passes over the land at the midnight hour of this long spiritual night that began at Calvary. It will be these disciples who are Israel, the spiritual reality of the nation of Israel that left Egypt with Moses and Aaron — the two witnesses will be as Moses and Aaron were. And as the nation that left Egypt rebelled in the wilderness of Paran, the nation of Christian disciples liberated from indwelling sin and death at the second Passover will rebel against God in the great falling away 220 days into the seven endtime years of tribulation.

But of the nation that left Egypt and was numbered in the census of the second year, “the Levities were not listed along with them by their ancestral tribe. For the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Only the tribe of Levi you shall not list, and you shall not take a census of them among the people of Israel’” (Num 1:47–49).

Disciples who keep the commandments and cover themselves with grace by taking the sacraments of bread and wine on the night that Jesus was betrayed are not numbered among those *Christians* who will rebel against God in the great falling away, for these disciples are “a royal priesthood” (1 Pet 2:9) and as such are spiritual Levites. They are the oil and the wine that Sin is not to harm (Rev 6:6).

Thus, those disciples that keep the commandments and cover themselves with the Passover sacraments of bread and wine—those disciples that usually question whether Sunday-observing Christians are truly of God—are not all of Israel but are represented in type by only the tribe of Levi. They should not be numbered among those that rebel against God in the great falling away; they should not be replaced man for man when Israel figuratively crosses the Jordan and enters into God’s rest ... they are neither “Israel” as numbered in the census, the barley that is bought and sold by Sin (again, Rev 6:6), nor are they the great multitude that followed Israel out of Egypt. But they are part of *Israel* that experiences or sees the miracles that the Lord does, with the endtime *miracles* being the empowering or filling of disciples with the Holy Spirit; hence, except where they are represented by Joshua, they will be included in the great falling away.

Analogies are metaphors, which names “one thing” as *another thing*, but one thing isn’t another thing. If it were, then it would be the other thing. So analogies and metaphors, like shadows, reveal what could otherwise not be known, but they give detail only darkly. ... It is those who are born of spirit and who by faith keep the commandments, especially the Sabbath commandment, during the first 1260 days of the Tribulation that are as Joshua and Caleb were when the nation that

left Egypt rebelled against God, but it is here where complexity enters into the modeling for neither Joshua nor Caleb were of Levi; they were numbered in the census of the second year. So a second type or shadow is also present.

It is those born of spirit and who keep the commandments, especially the Sabbath commandment, prior to the beginning of the Tribulation that are as Joshua was—and it is those born of spirit and who begin to keep the commandments, especially the Sabbath commandment, *during the first 220 days of the Tribulation* that are as Caleb was. But when a disciple is (1) truly born of spirit, and (2) keeps the commandments by faith, and (3) covers him or herself by taking the Passover sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed, the disciple is a spiritual Levite. So by extension, but because these things are only seen darkly detail is incomplete, there are disciples who keep the commandments but are not spiritual Levites. It is these disciples to which we must return ...

Once the great falling away occurs 220 days into the seven endtime years of tribulation—once those who were born of spirit prior to the beginning of the Tribulation and who, ten times, tempt God by remaining in sin when liberated from indwelling sin, with this tenth time occurring about Christmas of the year of liberation, the patience of God will end. He will send a great delusion (2 Thess 2:11–12) over rebelling disciples so that they will never believe the truth, repent, turn to Him, and be saved.

It isn't that God will not accept the spiritual repentance of one of His sons; it is that He will send a delusion over the lawless son so that this son will not spiritually repent. Thus, the spiritually lifeless shadow of sending a delusion over rebelling Israel is the Lord not accepting Israel's repentance in the wilderness of Paran, but condemning the nation to death by not permitting Israel to enter into His rest/presence.

Pause for a moment and consider the Father and the Son sending a delusion over lawless sons who will not believe the truth ... do *Philadelphians* see this today? *Philadelphians* do, don't they? For getting "Christians" who observe the 8<sup>th</sup>-day to see or to admit that they are willfully breaking the commandments is nigh impossible. They will end up telling the *Philadelphian* either that the day kept for the Sabbath doesn't matter or that keeping any day is *works* and Christians are saved by grace. Regardless of what is said to them, they will not submit to God, disclosing that they either have not been born of spirit (this is usually the case) or that God has already sent a delusion over them so that they cannot repent.

If the Father and the Son will send a delusion over infant sons of God so that these sons cannot repent, cannot believe the truth, cannot believe what is written in the Book of Truth—and this seen in Scripture—then every disciple should fear habitually transgressing the commandments.

Unfortunately, too many disciples take pride in their ignorance of the mysteries of God; they boastfully state that the ways of God cannot be known, that prophecy cannot be understood, that as long as the heart *is right with God* the person will be saved ... why would someone take pride in ignorance? Why would a disciple striving to understand the things of God dismiss "knowledge" because the disciple didn't personally come up with it? When is "truth" not "true"? Is it not *true* when someone else gives it to the disciple? Is the Father not

free to give knowledge to whomever He chooses? And if belief by faith is important, why would the Father not give knowledge to the person others are least likely to believe? If the Father only gave knowledge to those individuals to whom other disciples looked for knowledge, are these other disciples not believing another human being rather than the Father?

Knowledge will come from the one whom the Father chooses to reveal knowledge regardless of the person's perceived qualifications ... in the wilderness of Paran, how many choose to believe the Lord?

- In the wilderness of Paran, Israel was slain for unbelief (Heb 3:19) although the nation did not die that day because Moses intervened on the nation's behalf.
- The *Israel* that was slain did not exclude Levites, but included all “of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I [the Lord] did in Egypt and in the wilderness” (Num 14:22).
- Those disciples represented by Joshua and Caleb shall support the two witnesses as Joshua and Caleb supported Moses and Aaron (Num 14:5–10).
- Sabbatarian disciples born of spirit and liberated from indwelling sin and death that do not support the two witnesses will be as Levites who saw the Lord's glory but were counted with the rebels in the wilderness of Paran.

How many Israelites believed Moses when Korah rebuked Moses, saying, “You have gone too far! For all in the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them” (Num 16:3)?

- After the earth opened to swallow Korah and his fellow rebels alive, the congregation grumbled against Moses, saying, “You have killed the people of the Lord” (Num 16:41).
- Despite having seen the glory of the Lord and the signs done by the Lord and how Moses interceded with the Lord on Israel's behalf many times, the people of Israel did not believe that Moses alone spoke for the Lord.

Did Moses cause the earth to swallow Korah, or did the Lord cause the earth to swallow Korah? The congregation blamed Moses for Korah's death, why?

What Korah told Moses is the best expression of democratic ideals found in the Bible ... what did Korah say that was wrong? Was not the congregation holy? The Lord said that Israel was a holy nation (Ex 19:6). Was not the Lord among the people? Did Korah say anything that was false? No? So why would the Lord kill Korah in such a dramatic fashion, doing something that was not previously done?

The above questions have significance for the Churches of God, where democratic ideals are running amuck, causing disciples to be like Korah, saying that so-&-so thinks he knows everything, that so-&-so is taking too much upon him or herself ... well, who wants to spiritually stand with Korah? The movie character *Dirty Harry*, played by Clint Eastwood, asks, “Well Punk, do you feel lucky?” Do you; do you feel lucky? Do you feel you can get away with what cost Korah and his friends their lives? Once the Tribulation begins, do you think you can successfully challenge the one through whom the Lord speaks?

How is a disciple to know when a teacher of Israel speaks falsely? What claim to truth did Moses have? How is a disciple to know if a claim to possess knowledge of God that has come from God is true? Who is to say?

If Israel had never left Egypt, would anyone know that the Lord spoke to Moses from a burning bush, or that the Lord sent Moses back to Egypt, or that the Lord told Moses that Aaron shall be Moses' mouth and Moses was to be as God to Aaron? No! It was Israel's exodus from Egypt that gave Moses credibility with Israel—and that credibility was not enough to prevent Korah from expressing his democratic leanings. And it will be Israel's recovery from the North Country (representing Death) that gives to the two witnesses their credibility.

Without faith no one can please God, but unfocused faith is not faith at all.

A person has faith that someday he or she will die and will go to heaven where the person will be with God in endless bliss, but what kind of faith is this *faith*? Is this sort of faith not a cultural pipedream? Is this "faith" not a fanciful belief in happy endings to a miserable life here on earth? It is certainly unfounded faith, bound neither by Scripture or reality. Yet such faith is held by most Americans and by others throughout the world ...will such a faith please God? If it were to please God, then salvation is a many spoked wheel.

How was Israel to know that only Moses (through Aaron) spoke for the Lord? Even after seeing the earth swallow Korah, Israel didn't believe Moses but came to him to accuse him of killing the people of the Lord ... 14,700 died in the plague as the wrath of the Lord spread among the people, stayed only by Moses commanding Aaron to take fire from the altar and run among the people, making atonement for them (Num 16:49).

What will it take to stop the spreading unbelief that like a plague is consuming the Churches of God, leaving spiritual corpses in its wake? What would have convinced Korah to believe Moses? Was there anything Moses could have done to prevent Korah and his democratic friends from rebelling? Or should Moses have said, *Well, Punk, Make my day?* For if Moses had not intervened on Israel's behalf in the wilderness of Paran (Num 14:16–9), there would have been no additional rebellion by Korah.

There is no love in letting either Israel in the wilderness or the spiritually circumcised nation of Israel today die without trying to make atonement of the nation's unbelief. There is no love in asking Israel if the nation feels lucky. Love is shone in trying to get Israel into covenant with the Father and the Son—although the effort will, most likely, be unsuccessful, the effort primarily benefits the one making the effort, the one showing love.

Today, the Christian Church is directly analogous to Israel in Egypt ... the nation has slain the Passover Lamb of God, with this Lamb slain when 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE Pharisees slew Passover lambs halfway between the first *even* [noon] and the second *even* [sunset, or 6:00 p.m.], and the nation of Israel, now circumcised of heart, has been in one long night of watching and waiting. It has roasted the Passover Lamb of God with its fiery sins for nearly two millennia, and it has eaten of this Lamb of God when it has taken the sacraments of bread and wine on the night that Jesus was betrayed (the dark portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib) for centuries. Yet the midnight hour of this one long spiritual night that began at Calvary has



not yet come: humankind is not as far from God as humankind can get. This long spiritual night has not yet reached its midnight hour when humankind begins returning to the “light” that is Christ Jesus.

The midnight hour of the long spiritual night that began at Calvary occurs when the first horn of the spiritual king of Greece tramples and casts to the ground the ram, representing the silver kings of Persia, the spiritual power behind Christian orthodoxy. As Alexander the Great defeated his enemies, the first horn of the king of Greece will defeat the kings of Persia and will then be suddenly broken because he is “first.”

How does a disciple keep track of the battle between the bronze he-goat and the silver ram? Answer: By keeping track of how human beings respond to the appetites of the flesh—

1. Greek democratic values will prevail worldwide as the first horn of the king of Greece wins his war against the kings of Persia—these values include capitalism and human rights recognition;
2. The significance of the Christendom of the Cross will diminish until Christianity has no importance in this world;
3. Sun worship and earth worship will rise in importance until environmentalism rules politically throughout the world, this environmentalism seen in the *green* movement;
4. Sex and sexual freedom will ascend in importance ... real or perceived discrimination because of biological gender or gender orientation will be ruthlessly rooted out;
5. The consumption of foods based upon lust for, or taste of the foods will ascend in importance until obesity vies with hedonistic worship of the human form for cultural dominancy.

How is the first horn of the king of Greece doing?

If victory is not immediately at hand, it isn't far away; for as economic conditions in this world deteriorate, humankind will again turn toward God. In times of stress, people look to God, regardless of whether they know Him, for assistance. Therefore, the midnight hour will, most likely, occur while the present illusion of global prosperity continues to exist. The American President has to “talk up” America's economy, and the world has to believe him or people—as far from God as they presently are—will begin to return to God as a moth seeks the far light bulb.

So what remains for the first horn of the king of Greece to defeat?

There is, among the five kings of the king of Greece, internal tension that causes the amalgamated king of Greece to simultaneously embrace opposing positions on the same issue; the strengths and weaknesses of America disclose the strengths and weaknesses of this spiritual king. And this embracing of conflicting values (such as high oil consumption and banning off-shore drilling for oil) presents difficulties in determining what remains to be defeated. But it can safely be said that the first horn still has to defeat gender oppression in Islamic countries.

But exactly how thoroughly the first king must defeat the kings of Persia is seen in Alexander adopting the lifestyle and practices of the kings of Persia in Babylon II ...on the battlefield, the Greeks defeated the vast army of Darius, but

in the bedroom, Darius' harem defeated Alexander. So the spiritual first king of the king of Greece will in some or in many aspects continue the practices of the silver Persian kings even though these silver kings have been trampled and broken. And it is in religion—the Christianity of the Cross—where the Persians will, following the king of Greece's trampling of the silver ram, compromise the lofty principles of the spiritual kings of Greece.

The victory of the first king of the king of Greece over the kings of Persia will cause humankind to be as far from God as the world can get; so the he-goat's victory (Dan chap 8) and the midnight hour of the long spiritual night that began at Calvary coincide. Almost immediately after this victory, though, the first king or first horn of the king of Greece is broken because he is "first."

In 31 CE, on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of the year beginning with the first new moon after the spring equinox [the second month of rabbinical Judaism's calculated calendar applied retroactively], the Passover Lamb of God (a Lamb appropriate to the size of the house of God) was slain as the reality foreshadowed by the annual sacrifice of Passover lambs that began in Egypt. About this Lamb's death, Jesus said, "The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light" (John 12:35–36) ... Jesus spoke these words on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the first month. The darkness overtook the natural nation of Israel on the 14<sup>th</sup> day—and ever since that day except as natural Israelites have become disciples of Christ Jesus, the natural nation of Israel has walked in darkness as spiritually blind men (and women).

What happened to the spiritually lifeless natural nation of Israel will happen to the born-of-spirit nation of Israel that is in bondage to indwelling sin and death as the natural nation was in physical bondage to a physical king/Pharaoh. Israel's exodus from Egypt serves as the shadow and type of the Christian Church's escape from sin and death, with individual Christians both individually and collectively representing the Church. And where disciples are in history is where Israel in Egypt was when "Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, 'Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning. ... Then the people of Israel went and did so; as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did" (Ex 12:21–22, 28). What has not yet happened is, "At midnight the Lord struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock" (v. 29).

- The reality that exists in Scripture is that all firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God will die suddenly at the midnight hour of the long spiritual night that began at Calvary.
- A shadow is in one less dimension than the reality that casts the shadow—
  1. The firstborn beasts slain in Egypt form the shadow of human beings not born of spirit;

2. The firstborn of Egyptians slain in Egypt form the shadow of human beings who call themselves Christians;
3. The firstborn of Israel—the nation identified by *Yah* as the firstborn son of God (Ex 4:22)—who were covered by the blood of a paschal lamb form the shadow of Christian disciples who take the Passover sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed;

But because a shadow exists in one less dimension than the reality that cast the shadow, there is in the reality a fourth level of slaying: John writes, “Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil” and by the practice of sinning it is evident “who are the children of the devil” (1 John 3:8, 10). Thus, the first convert of the devil is the firstborn child of the devil, with all of the fallen angels being children of the devil. And the golden-colored bronze king of Greece looks like the devil, the old dragon that is the spiritual king of Babylon—and of this bronze king of Greece, the great horn is the first king of the king of Greece. He is, because he is broken suddenly, also the first convert of the devil; he is the firstborn of the devil. And because he will not and cannot cover himself with the blood of the Lamb of God, he will die suddenly on the midnight hour of the long spiritual night that began at Calvary.

It will here be asserted that the first half of the Tribulation (the first 1260 days) forms the shadow and type of the second half (the second 1260 days). It will also be asserted that the sixth Trumpet Plague that occurs at or near the end of the first 1260 days forms the shadow and copy of the death angels slaying firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God, with these two slaughters leaving two thirds of humankind physically and/or spiritually dead and one third alive (Zech 13:8) ... the math works as follows:

1. Of all of humankind, approximately one third are firstborns that will be slain at the midnight hour of the long night that began at Calvary—because only firstborns are slain, the deaths of so many will be clearly identified as an act of God, thereby turning all of humankind to God.
2. Of the two thirds or two parts of humankind left alive, a fourth part will be given to Death, the fourth horseman of the Apocalypse; thus,  $\frac{2}{3} \times \frac{3}{4} = \frac{1}{2}$  of humankind left alive going into the sixth Trumpet Plague.
3. Of the one half of humankind, one third will be slain in the Sixth Trumpet Plague; thus  $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{2}{3} = \frac{1}{3}$  of humankind will still be alive going into the second half of the Tribulation.

Human beings are reasonably intelligent: when Buddhists and Muslims and even Atheists realize that their firstborns perished but the firstborns covered by the blood of the Lamb of God did not, there will be mass conversion to Christendom without, though, the Father drawing these converts from the world. Therefore, the converts will not be born of spirit and will not be able to keep the commandments (Rom 8:7), but will be as silver Christendom is today. Their zeal for God will be great, and they will persecute all those who do not worship the Cross. They will join themselves to the demonic kings of the South and of the North. They will be the muscle for the legs of iron. And they will continue to worship demons.

The need to continue this subject in next Sabbath’s reading remains.

*The person conducting the services should again read or assign to be read Jeremiah chapters 16 and 23.*

**Commentary:** Silver Christendom supports lying prophets by the thousands.

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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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