

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The concept behind this Sabbath's selection is Passover.

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Weekly Readings

For the Sabbath of April 19, 2008

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.

The person conducting the service should read or assign to be read Matthew chapter 12, verses 22 through 42; followed by Matthew chapter 16, verses 1 through 4; followed by Jonah chapters 1 & 2.

Commentary: There is in the story of Jonah no ambiguity about how long Jonah was in the belly of the great fish: the principle of inclusiveness, in which part of a day counts as the day and part of a night counts as a night, doesn't permit two nights to equal three nights—doesn't permit a Friday crucifixion and Sunday resurrection to satisfy the sign of Jonah. Thus, before going farther, every person who has Jesus being crucified on Friday and resurrected Sunday morning is dishonest with Scripture and denies Christ. NO EXCEPTIONS! There is no honest apologetic that can make two nights equal three nights, nor any that will allow either the first day of the week (Jesus was resurrected before dawn) or the day He was crucified (He was placed in the tomb at sunset) to count as an inclusive day.

There are more people who deny that Jesus was from God than believe that He was; so those Christians who deny Jesus, who deny that He fulfilled the only sign He gave of His divinity need not feel embarrassed by their unbelief, nor do they need to continue appropriating the name *Christian*. They need to be honest with themselves and admit that they don't believe that Jesus was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish. They need to quit lying to themselves and to others. The continued lying damages their character and actually pushes them farther away from the Father and the Son.

Christendom is awash in babble, most trivial, most coming from being physically minded, most no more than white noise that is filtered out by belief. But this background babble hinders infant sons of God from hearing the voice of Jesus (John 10:3), a voice that seems alien to those long accustomed

to hearing the noise emanating from the Christianity of the cross. Therefore, certain tenets to the faith must be restated so that this Passover season, everyone can believe:

1. Jesus gave only one sign to Israel that He was from heaven: this sign is the story of Jonah, who was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish; who entered Sheol and who was resurrected to life as the spokesman sent by God to the people of Nineveh who worshipped Dagon, the fish god.
2. This sign of Jonah is like the sign of a red sky in that it has context-specific significance, meaning that it reflects tranquility going into darkness and reflects turmoil going into daybreak, opposing meanings coming from “night” and “day.”
3. The Church is the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27).
4. The Body of Christ is crucified with Christ and buried with Christ in baptism (Rom 6:3-11).
5. So when the Body of Christ returned to sin [lawlessness], the Body of Christ “died” from taking on sin in a manner analogous to Jesus on the cross dying from taking on sin.
6. Therefore, as the physical body of Christ was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, the spiritual Body of Christ was, through separation from God, dead and buried in spiritual Babylon for three days and three nights.
7. But the gates of Hades would not prevail over Jesus’ physical body: Jesus saw no corruption and was resurrected from the dead after three days.
8. Likewise, the gates of Hades will not prevail over the spiritual Body of Christ which will be resurrected from death at a [second Passover liberation](#) of Israel.
9. The dark portion of the first day of the week, now [when Jesus was resurrected but before Mary Magdalene came to the tomb in the dark to find the stone rolled away] becomes analogous to the seven endtime years of tribulation.
10. But it is the resurrection of Jesus’ physical body that corresponds to the red sky at evening; whereas it is the resurrection of His spiritual Body, the Church, that corresponds to the red sky in the morning.

The Body of Christ returned to sin after old selves were buried and new creatures, born of spirit, were alive in the tents of flesh of former sons of disobedience. No further sacrifice remained for these new

creatures or new selves or new natures when they presented themselves as willing bondservants to sin. Thus, their lawlessness caused the Father to deliver them back into the hand of the prince of this world. After all, it was Satan not Christ that they wanted to serve anyway; for when sin had no dominion over them (Rom 6:14) and they were free to keep the commandments of God, they spurned God, mocked Christ, and returned to disobedience, contending that since Jesus kept the law they didn't have to. They didn't even have to attempt walking uprightly before God. They argued that faith in Christ alone was sufficient for salvation, but their faith was a dead faith, a lifeless shadow of living faith that would cause the uncircumcised person to keep the precepts of the law and have his or her uncircumcision counted as circumcision (Rom 2:26).

Faith is dynamic. It is not a fungus that can be bottled and examined as a museum specimen. Faith is believing Christ Jesus and attempting to walk as He walked (1 John 2:3-6). Faith is imitating Paul as he imitated Christ (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17). Faith is a disciple living as a Judean in a world consigned to disobedience. Faith is keeping the commandments to the best of a person's ability, then believing that Jesus' righteousness covers those times when the disciple stumbles. Faith is walking uprightly as a biped before God, not shambling along as a beast, knowing neither good nor evil.

Faith will have the believing disciple examining calendar dating of events differently than will the unbelieving Christian, the one who denies Jesus and who creates an apologetic of lawlessness ... the unbelief that comes to those lawless "Christians" that continue to dwell in spiritual Babylon might be forgivable if it were not for the harm they do to infant sons of Gods: it's hard to forgive baby killers. It's hard to forgive the "Christian" who teaches a newly born son of God that this son doesn't need to try to live as Jesus lived. It's hard to forgive the "Christian" who teaches infants not to take the [Passover sacraments](#) on the night that Jesus was betrayed, the 14th of Abib. It's especially hard to forgive the "Christian" who teaches infants to play in the flames of the lake of fire by teaching them to attempt entering into God's rest [His presence] on the first day of the week when the Sabbath is the weekly memorial commemorating liberation from sin.

Under the Sinai covenant, the Sabbath was a commemoration of creation: "For in six days the Lord [YHWH] made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (Ex 20:11). But under the eternal Moab covenant, the covenant to which better promises have been added and its mediator changed from Moses to the glorified Jesus, the Sabbath is a commemoration to liberation: "You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord [YHWH] your God [*Elohim*] brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath" (Deut 5:15).

The Sabbath is to week days what the Passover is to the annual calendar: the entire Passover season from when the paschal lamb is selected to the last convocation of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is as a Sabbath, with the 15th of Abib, being the great day of this *Sabbath*.

Some sincere but erring Sabbatarian disciples will have “unleavened,” the expression by which Matthew and Luke refer to the Passover season, meaning only the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—the 15th through the 22nd of Abib. These sincere but erring disciples will have Israelites eating unleavened bread for only these seven days. Their understanding of Scripture comes from a close reading of the Exodus Passover account, and the assumption Jesus was crucified, not on the Preparation day for *the great day of the Sabbath* (John 19:31), John’s expression for what Matthew and Luke simply identify as “unleavened,” but on the high Sabbath itself ... some logic needs to be applied to this scenario since few secular Jewish records have survived. Would Jesus have been taken by servants of the high priest on the high Sabbath, the 15th of Abib? Probably not. Would Jesus have been illegally questioned in the dark portion of the day by temple officials on the high Sabbath? Well, if they would question Him illegally at night, they might, but that would probably be going too far for even them. Was the practice of releasing a condemned prisoner on the high day, after Israel would have left Egypt, or on the Preparation Day, when Israel was about to leave Egypt? The practice would not have been an after-the-type practice, but would have occurred on the Preparation Day. And what evidence exists to contradict John’s account of what happened? Only that Jesus ate the Passover meal before He was betrayed.

The plagues in Egypt made a separation between Israel and Egypt, a separation that physically existed through Israel living in Goshen as a slave people. They did not live scattered throughout Egypt, or live as slaves among the free peoples of Egypt. They were slaves of the Pharaoh, and they would have been somewhat confined geographically so that they could be controlled, for their numbers were many (Ex 5:5), possibly as many or more than the population of Egyptians living in the lower Nile region. Therefore, their neighbors, especially ones with gold and silver in any quantity, would most likely have been living some distance away from where Israel lived. To spoil their neighbors would not have had an Israelite walking ten steps next door to visit a rich Egyptian ... in a nation with a dense population, such as India, the concept of one’s nearest neighbor being two miles away, or ten miles away, is almost unimaginable. But Israel left Egypt about 600,000 men on foot strong, with wives, children, and a mixed multitude tagging along behind. How close would a wealthy Egyptian have lived to a slave mass of approximately two million people? Ten miles away would have been too close. Israel’s neighbors were not in adjoining houses, but were separated from Israel as antebellum Southern plantation owners were separated from their slave quarters, with the magnification in distance coming through Israel not being individually owned, but the property of Pharaoh.

Returning to the Exodus account, Israel was told to remain in their houses until daybreak (12:22), instruction that typologically corresponds to disciples remaining in tents of flesh (as Jonah was in the whale) until resurrected to glory, not just to life, what the last high day of Passover season represents. The following needs to be remembered:

1. Physical circumcision is the shadow and type of spiritual circumcision, or circumcision of the heart.
2. A physically circumcised Israelite dwelling in a house in Egypt is the shadow and type of the new creature, born of spirit as a son of God and spiritually circumcised after the heart is cleansed by a journey of faith, dwelling in a tent of flesh that remains consigned to disobedience.
3. The Passover liberation of physically circumcised Israel from physical bondage to a physical king is the shadow and type of the second Passover liberation of spiritually circumcised Israel from spiritual bondage to the sin and death (or Paul's law of sin and death – Rom 7:21-25) that continues to dwell in the tent of flesh in which the new creature born of spirit resides.
4. The weekly Sabbath is commemoration of the spiritually circumcised son of God's liberation from sin in anticipation of the second Passover liberation of the tent of flesh in which this son of God resides.
5. Keeping the Sabbath by faith (and organizing the disciple's life around keeping the Sabbath) becomes a representation of the daily sacrifice just as the paschal lamb physically circumcised Israel sacrificed during "unleavened" is a type of Jesus being sacrificed as the Passover Lamb of God at the hour when temple officials were then (31 CE) deeming that paschal lambs should be sacrificed.
6. Keeping the Sabbath by faith requires that the disciple daily put on the mantle of Christ's righteousness through prayer: this mantle of Christ's righteousness is Grace, the covering of blood and righteousness that blots out the sins of disciples.
7. Without keeping the Sabbath, without taking the Passover sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed, disciples are not under Grace, but have returned to being bondservants to sin and the prince of disobedience.

Judaism today keeps its Seder service on two nights: the dark portion of the 15th, and the dark portion of the 16th of Abib. This practice of two Seder services is justified by a possible error in the calculated calendar, with this justification going back to the 30th Sabbath, the practice of holding new moon observances on two consecutive nights. But the practice of observing the Passover on two consecutive nights comes from retained cultural memory of Israel sacrificing the Passover lamb on the 14th at even, then leaving Egypt the following night, on the 15th at even. The seven days of unleavened bread that Moses initially commands Israel to keep are inclusive or exclusive of the 14th of Abib, the language is ambiguous. The physically circumcised nation had not yet proved to be

unfaithful, but this nation's unbelief would not be long in manifesting itself. And with this nation's unbelief came the need for a second Passover liberation of Israel, a nation that would be circumcised of heart by spirit.

The Seder is a poor replacement for the sacrifice of a paschal lamb, and a doubly poor replacement for taking the Passover sacraments of bread and wine. Yet for all of Judaism's unbelief, the nation still understands that the Passover doesn't occur many times a year, but once a year—at one season, when all males were to present themselves where God had placed His name (Deut 16:16). *Yah* no longer places His name in present day Jerusalem. Rather, God has placed His name wherever disciples take the Passover sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed.

Catholic, Orthodox, Mormon, and other fellowships who take some form of the sacraments every week do so in lieu of keeping the Sabbath. Their ignorance exceeds even their mocking of Christ's sacrifice. May they utterly loathe their present practices when the Body of Christ is resurrected from death at the second Passover, which isn't in the distant future but an event soon to occur.

The chronology has been given before: it will once again be given. Jesus entered Jerusalem on the 10th day of the first month (John 12:1, 12) as the selected Passover Lamb of God, a "Lamb" appropriate to the size of the household of God. This day was the weekly Sabbath. Jesus then asked the Pharisees a question they could not answer on the 12th day of the first month. He sent His disciples to prepare where He would eat the Passover on the 13th day, and He ate the Passover on the dark portion of the 14th. He was betrayed at or after midnight at the hour when the death angel passed over Egypt. He was crucified during the daylight portion of the 14th, and His death at about 3:00 pm removed the light from this world as Israel's looting their Egyptian neighbors removed those things that reflected light from Egypt. He was placed into the Garden Tomb at sunset, the beginning of the 15th, the *great day of the Sabbath*, the high Sabbath. He remained in the tomb all of the 15th, all of the 16th, when the women would have bought spices (they would not have bought spices before He died, nor on the high Sabbath), all of the 17th, the weekly Sabbath, and He was gone from the tomb while it was still dark on the 18th, the first day of the week.

The year Jesus was crucified was 31 CE. The first full moon after the equinox was too early for the barley to be ripe enough to begin the harvest, so the Hebrew year 3790 was continued one extra month. What is on a modern calendar calculator the month of Lyyar of year 3791 was actually the month of Nissan—no calculated calendar existed until after the temple was destroyed in 70CE. The Sanhedrin would examine the barley and see if the heads were far enough into the milk that a new year could be declared with the present moon (if not already full) when the equinox occurred. In 3790, the first full moon after the equinox occurred on March 27 (Julian calendar) at about 11:00 am, meaning that this full moon could not have been seen until that evening, or March 28 (if this Julian day began at noon as it should). The equinox was the 23rd. This would have been too early for the barley

to have been ripe. Another month would have been added—and the addition of this month will not be discernible mathematically. It is only discernible through John's detailed chronology of the events of that Passover week, which he refers to simply as *the Sabbath*.

There is a tremendous amount of babble concerning Jesus' ministry, almost all of which comes directly or indirectly from the prince of the world. Disciples need to cut through this babble. Unfortunately, this won't happen as long as they remain willing bondservants of sin.

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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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