

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 temple.

## Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of June 7, 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 services should read or assign to be read Jeremiah chapter 52, followed by Ezekiel chapter 10.*

**Commentary:** What does it mean by “the glory of the Lord [YHWH] went out from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim” (Ezek 10:18)? How does the *glory of the Lord* differ from YHWH? How does this *glory* stand, as if it were a person who has just crossed a threshold, over the cherubim? And how is this *glory* different from the *glory* that shone from Moses' face (Ex 34:29; 2 Cor 3:7) after he, Moses, entered into the presence of the God?

Before questions about the glory of the Lord can be addressed, certain “givens” must be grasped: the temple in physical Jerusalem was a shadow and type of the heavenly temple of God in heavenly Jerusalem—but John the Revelator saw in vision no temple in the heavenly city when it came down to new earth (Rev 21:22), for the temple of the heavenly city is the “Lord God the Almighty—κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ,” the naming expression that is seen in Revelation 4:8. Therefore, the *Lord God the Almighty* dwells in heavenly Jerusalem as the temple Solomon built dwelt in earthly Jerusalem.

- The *Lord God the Almighty* corresponds spiritually to the physical temple built of cut (offsite) stone and timber that Solomon dedicated with the sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep (2 Chron 7:5).
- Until the Lord divided Israel, there were not many temples in earthly Jerusalem, but one temple built by Solomon. No temple existed during the days of Samuel, Saul, or David. The “sanctuary” or temple was a fabric tent under Moses and Joshua, not a permanent structure as we would expect a temple to be.
- The idolatrous kings of Samaria and Judah that reigned after the division of Israel polluted the temple of God and then went on to establish other temples not dedicated to the Lord, but dedicated to idols and demons.
- Because of Israel's idolatry, the Lord delivered the northern house of Samaria into the hand of Assyria [i.e., into death] and the southern house of Judah

into the hand of Babylon [i.e., into the kingdom of this world] for the destruction of the flesh that Israel might live spiritually when judgments are revealed.

- Jeremiah's seventy years prophecy—"This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years" (Jer 25:11)—has Israel serving the king of Babylon throughout the period when there is no temple in Jerusalem.
- But the remnant that returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the house of God by the decree of King Cyrus did not return as free peoples, but returned as slaves to the king of Persia, subject to the will of the kings of Babylon/Persia (Ezra 5:13; 6:1-5). They were not again a free people until the Maccabean War, when physical sons of light defeated the Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes IV, the representation of the endtime king of the North.
- When the second temple built by Zerubbabel was dedicated after a remnant of Israel returned to Jerusalem—Jerusalem was without a temple for 70 years (from 586 to 516 BCE)—the *glory of the Lord* did not then return to earthly Jerusalem, for this second temple was without the Ark of the Covenant or the Urim and Thummim [והתמים האורים — here written from left to right].
- Because the *glory of the Lord* was not in the second temple when dedicated, as Israel physically remained in subjection to the kings of Babylon/Persia served the spiritual king of Babylon, Israel continued to serve foreign kings throughout the period covered by the concealing shadow of the long vision the prophet Daniel received (Dan chaps 10-12).
- The *glory of the Lord* did not return to the second temple until Jesus entered the temple Herod built to cleanse it (John 2:13-22) from the *worldliness* that comes with buying and selling, the principle activity of this world, the spiritual reality of the kingdom of Babylon.
- The second temple went from being a physical structure without the *glory of the Lord* to being the Church in which the spirit [i.e., breath] of the Father and the Son now dwells.
- When moving from physical to spiritual, all disciples form the second temple, with the new creatures, born of spirit [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], being analogous to the Levitical priesthood in the physical temple.
- Therefore, the new creatures, born of spirit, with both the spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9) and the spirit of the one who raised Christ from the dead (v. 11) jointing dwelling within tents of flesh, form a type of the *Lord God the Almighty* in a way that will be labeled as blasphemous by those who called Jesus a blasphemer for calling God His Father (John 5:18; 10:31-39).
- What Jesus cites from the law is Ps 82:6, which reads, "I said, 'You are gods, / sons of the Most High, all of you; / nevertheless, like men you shall die, / and fall like any prince.'" Paul identifies disciples as sons of the Most High (Gal 4:6-7 *et al*) and by extension as gods even though disciples remain mortal and subject to death.
- It is not blasphemy for a son to identify himself as a son of God, but it is blasphemy for a servant to call himself a son of God.

There is a persistent problem that has theologically hamstrung Christendom from the beginning, and that problem is the apparent singularity of the Tetragrammation *YHWH*, singularity that caused conciliar Christendom to label Ante-Nicene theologians as heretics. If *God is one* is a describing expression that expresses numerical singleness rather than unity, then the plurality expressed by the Gospel writers forces “God” into a form of dispensationalism by which “God” has made Himself known through separate relationships and distinct manifestations as expressed in Sabellianism, a thoroughly and properly denounced model of trinitarianism. God is not today the Son and yesterday the Father and tomorrow the Holy Spirit as if He were a shape-shifting shaman, the concept central to Sabellianism. Rather, God is the “house” of the Father, the temple or sanctuary that dwells in heavenly Jerusalem, the reality of the temple Solomon built, the temple in which the sons of Levi served as priests.

The irony underlying conciliar Christendom is that this belief paradigm has made all of the Gospel writers, especially John (as well as Paul in his epistles), heretics that taught a separateness between the Father and the Son that would see glorified human beings one with the Father in the same way that the Son is one with the Father, a separateness that denies personhood to the metaphorical “breath” of the Father or to the metaphorical “breath” of the Son (metaphorical in the sense that neither the Father nor the Son “breathe” air), a separateness that precludes validity to the Cappadocian “three hypostases” model of the Godhead. From Irenaeus in the 2<sup>nd</sup>-Century to Augustine in the 5<sup>th</sup>-Century, emphasis was placed on the Most High’s “oneness” (as in numerical singularity), with triune separateness manifested through God making Himself known to humanity in different ways at different times, and not as two or three separate personages but as a single personage having separate attributes. But the underlying problem encountered by those who professed triune separateness remained: whose Son was Jesus when Mary “was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit [πνεύματος ἁγίου]” (Matt 1:18)? Was Jesus the Son of the Holy Spirit, or the Son of the Father? Or neither—was Jesus the only Son of the *Logos*? That is the testimony of John.

If the Father and the Holy Spirit were not one personage, and one personage that was separate from the personage that was the Son, linguistic difficulties could not be resolved, with these difficulties supporting the claims made by Bishop Arius that Jesus was not born fully divine, but born of Mary as a man like any other man. But the Arian position raises as many problems as it seeks to resolve, for if Jesus were merely a man, how should disciples read what Jesus said to Philip? “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, “Show us the Father”? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves” (John 14:9-11).

Pause here: the *Lord God the Almighty* will be the temple in heavenly Jerusalem when this holy city comes following the coming of the heavens and new earth. If Jesus is in the Father, then Jesus is in the *Lord God the Almighty*. But if the Father is in Jesus, then the Father is in the *Lord God the Almighty*, thereby making the naming phrase “the *Lord God the Almighty*” the identifier of the temple in which both Jesus and the Father dwell, and the identifier of the temple in which glorified disciples will dwell with Jesus and the Father when they are one with the Father and the Son (John 17:21-23).

What Philip saw with his eyes was the flesh and blood body of the man Jesus, not the glorified spiritual “house” in which the Father dwells as a disciple today dwells in a tent of flesh. The fleshy “house” in which Jesus dwelt—the fleshy house that Philip saw—was not the glorified house of the Father although it was *the glory of the Lord*, so of necessity the linguistic objects Jesus had assigned to His words, *Whoever has seen me has seen the Father*, are not the objects which Philip expected or objects Philip would have “usually” assigned to these words. But Jesus was not then claiming to be the Father, for elsewhere Jesus said, “My Father is working until now, and I am working” (John 5:18), indicating both a separateness and a sameness between Himself and the Father that would have His Father working until that very moment, and Jesus also working, with the Father who resided in Jesus working through the works of Jesus. Thus, if a person did not believe the audible words uttered by Jesus, the person should believe the works done by Jesus for these works were the earthly manifestations of the words of the Father, words that could not be fully expressed through vibrations of air molecules but words expressed by the renewing breath (Ps 104:30) of God through healing miracles.

Judaism rejects Christianity because of Jesus’ claim that His Father [πατέρα ἰδίον] was the Most High God [θεόν], a claim that would make Him equal to God even though He was a man born of Mary ... it is here where the words [linguistic icons] of this world, used to describe the things of this world, are pushed far enough beyond their limitations that those human beings not yet born of spirit are as blind and deaf men (and women), for meaning is assigned by all readers or hearers to all words and human intellect will not, of itself, produce spiritual understanding. Without being born of spirit, a person cannot intelligibly speak about spiritual things or understand spiritual concepts for the carnal or natural mind is hostile to God, according to Paul (Rom 8:7), who had considerable experience in trying but failing to explain spiritual things to willing listeners, willing but still carnal listeners. Therefore, what it means for born of spirit [πνεῦμα] disciples to be the temple of God, analogous to the temple Solomon built, becomes central to understanding the “oneness” of God.

Paul writes, “According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 3:10-11). The writer of Hebrews says,

For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is [θεός].) Now Moses was faithful in all [the house of Him] as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is faithful over [the house of Him] as a son. And we are his house if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope. (Heb 3:3-6)

Disciples are the house [οἶκος] of *Theos* [θεός], with this *house of Theos* being the temple of God whose foundation Paul laid, if disciples hold fast their confidence in Christ Jesus, the cause of and source for their boasting in their hope. Moses was a servant in this *house of Theos*, but disciples are not servants in this house, nor do disciples dwell in this house. *Disciples are this house of Theos* as disciples are the temple of God.

Paul also writes, “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God [θεός] will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple” (1 Cor 3:16-17). Elsewhere Paul writes,

What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God [θεός] said,

“I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them,  
and I will be their God [θεός],  
and they shall be my people.

Therefore go out from their midst,

and be separate from them, says the Lord [κύριος],  
and touch no unclean thing;

then I will welcome you,  
and I will be a father to you,

and you shall be sons and daughters to me,  
says the Lord Almighty [κύριος παντοκράτωρ].” (2 Cor 6:16-18)

The Lord [YHWH] spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai and said, “If you walk in my statutes and observe my commandments and do them, then ... *I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people.* I am the Lord [YHWH] your God [Elohim], who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves. And I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect” (Lev 26:3, 12-13 emphasis added). Thus, we see that for the Lord Almighty to dwell among disciples and to walk among disciples—for disciples to truly be the temple of the living God—disciples are to walk in His statutes and observe His commandments; for only when walking as Jesus walked (1 John 2:3-6) will disciples walk upright, erect as men, as bipeds, before God. Transgression of the law causes disciples to shamle along as beasts of the fields, livestock to be sacrificed in the heavenly realm when the temple of God is dedicated following Christ’s return.

Before the Lord will dwell among disciples, a condition exists: disciples are to walk as Jesus walked, and Jesus kept the commandments thus the Father dwelt with the man Jesus of Nazareth so much so that to see Jesus was to see the Father.

The Lord Almighty is *Theos*—God. And about this *Theos* the Apostle John wrote,

In the beginning was the Word [λόγος], and the Word [λόγος] was with God [θεός], and the Word [λόγος] was God [θεός]. He was in the beginning with God [θεός]. ... He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, but his own people did not receive him. ... And the Word [λόγος] became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as [of an only one—μονογενοῦς] from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-2, 10-11, 14)

The Father is *Theon* [θεός], who because of case ending, has to be a separate entity from the *Logos* [λόγος] who was *Theos* [θεός]. And it is this *Theos* that will dwell with and walk among Israel ... this He has done! And this he will do again.

John holds that the *Logos* coexisted with *Theon* in the beginning: *Theos* was not a separate dispensation of *Theon*, but was one with *Theon* as Eve was one with Adam. This statement is not a form of Sabellianism, which would have *Theos* being a sequential manifestation of *Theon*. Although Eve’s flesh had come from Adam’s flesh, Eve’s flesh

was not Adam's flesh, for the chromosomes would have differed. Thus, *Elohim* [singular in usage] "modified" Adam's flesh to make from Adam the woman that would be his helpmate. Likewise, the *Logos* was not *Theon* although both dwelt in the same house as Eve dwelt with Adam, with the name of this house in Greek being "θε—" [θε + the case ending] with disciples to also dwell in this house as younger sons (Rom 8:29) when they are one with Jesus and with the Father (John 17:21-23).

But to dwell in the house of God, disciples are to imitate Paul as He imitated Christ (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17). It does disciples no good for them to imitate the prince of this world, or his ministers (2 Cor 11:14-15), or the disciple's lawless neighbors or former friends. Only by walking as Jesus walked will a disciple cross the threshold and enter into the house of God as a younger son of God.

When the *glory of the Lord* left the temple in earthly Jerusalem not to return until the man Jesus walked into the temple after His ministry began, it wasn't the Lord [*YHWH*] who spoke to Zechariah when this son of Levi was serving as priest before God, according to the custom of the priesthood, but the angel Gabriel—for as the Lord [*YHWH*] told Moses following the idolatry of Aaron, the Lord would no longer go before Israel but would send an angel before Israel (Ex 33:2-3), meaning that Israel could not enter into the presence of God, or into God's rest (what it means to enter into the presence of God), once the Lord sent Israel into captivity and into spiritual death through separation from Him. Moses pleaded with the Lord to relent, saying, "If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here" (v. 15), and the Lord did relent: "This very thing that you have spoken I will do, for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name" (v. 17). Then Moses asked to see the glory of the Lord (v. 18), and was told he could only see the back of the Lord (v. 23).

All of the goodness of God, the name of *The Lord* [*YHWH*], His mercy—none of these are the *glory of the Lord* (Ex 33:19-23). Yet Christendom identifies these things, especially His goodness and His mercy, as His glory.

The prophet Ezekiel records,

The word of the Lord [*YHWH*] came to me: "Son of man, take a stick and write on it, 'For Judah, and the people of Israel associated with him'; then take another stick and write on it: 'For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with him.' And join them one to another into one stick, that they may be one in your hand. ... Behold, I am about to take the stick of Joseph (that is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated with him. And I will join with it the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, that they may be one in my hand. ... My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes. ... My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord [*YHWH*] who sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore." (Ezek 37:15-17, 19, 24, 27-28)

Jesus did not come in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE as the Messiah, but as shadow of the anointed one who will come at the end of this era ... Jesus came to initiate *the Sabbath* that includes all of Unleavened Bread as part of one spiritual Sabbath that has Israel living without sin, beginning with drawn disciples being covered by grace, the righteousness of Christ Jesus. It is this *Sabbath* that John references in his gospel (19:31

— the high day was the *great day* of the Sabbath, with the naming phrase “the Sabbath” representing all of Unleavened Bread and all of the period from the 10<sup>th</sup> of Abib through the 22<sup>nd</sup>), and it is this Sabbath that Paul identifies as “the end of the ages” (1 Cor 10:11) which began while he lived—

- It is convenient to refer to the seven endtime years of tribulation as *the end of this age*, but restricting *the end of this age* to the Tribulation is technically inaccurate.
- The end of this age incorporates the entire period when Israel will live without sin—and presently, those who have been born of spirit and who have made a journey of faith of sufficient length to cleanse the heart so that it can be circumcised live without sin in that they are covered by grace, the garment of Christ’s righteousness.
- Therefore, the end of this age began when Jesus breathed on ten of His disciples and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22); thus, Paul accurately writes, “Now these things [what happened to Israel in the wilderness] happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come” (again, 1 Cor 10:11).
- The nearly two millennia between when Paul writes and when disciples again use typology as instruction constitutes the hours between sunset and midnight of the dark portion of the great day of the Sabbath that is generically known as the Tribulation.
- The midnight hour of the great day of the Sabbath will see the liberation of Israel from indwelling sin and death as the midnight hour of the first Passover night [when Moses was with Israel in Egypt] saw the physically circumcised nation of Israel liberated from physical bondage to a physical king.
- The second Passover liberation of Israel will occur on the midnight hour of the great day of the Sabbath—the Sabbath that saw the Passover Lamb of God sacrificed on the Preparation Day for this great day of the Sabbath.
- Thus, implementation of the second Passover liberation of Israel will begin seven actual years (2520 days, with day 1260 being a doubled day) of tribulation, years during which Israel will no longer be under grace but will be empowered by (or filled with) the Holy Spirit and hence set free from sin and death.

In its Christology debates that stretched from the Ante-Nicene fathers to Post-Nicene bishops, the early Church did not succumb to superior biblical exegesis as the Apologists promoted an economic version of a triune deity that none could explain as if confusion magically led to greater theological precision. Rather, they felt necessity to conform the “Christian deity” to the numerical singleness of Judaism’s monotheism dictated to these lawless disciples that not only must Jesus and the Father be one in unity but that they must also be one in number. Although many theologians will argue that the Apostolic Fathers delivered to their successors a clearly defined apologetic, this is simply not true: what the Apostolic Fathers delivered was the mystery of lawlessness that was already at work while Paul still lived (2 Thess 2:7). The Pastor writes that all in Asia left him (2 Tim 1:15). Those in Achaia questioned whether Paul was of God, and Jews were seeking his life. Who was left in Judea, in Asia, in Achaia to pass along the foundation that Paul laid, for as Peter warns (2 Pet 3:16-17), the lawless were twisting Paul’s epistles into

instruments for their destruction ... there simply wasn't anyone left, especially not after 135 CE and the rebellion of Shimon Bar-Kokhba.

The above must never be forgotten: there is no one after John to whom disciples can turn for instruction in the mystery of God. Irenaeus is the 2<sup>nd</sup>-Century theologian who dominated Christian orthodoxy before Origen—and his theological framework was that of the Apologists ... at the Nicene conference (ca 325 CE), the vast majority of the bishops theologically followed Origen, who followed Irenaeus; and for this vast majority of bishops (if such a phrase can be applied to 300, all that attended the Council at Nicea, of 1,800 then-ordained Christian bishops), it was absolutely essential that the Father and the Son be numerically one, the only way these bishops could interpret *homoousios* [of one substance] and still have any deity remotely resembling the deity Judaism worshiped. And from their very limited understanding of spiritual matters—limited because of their lawlessness—the only obvious way for the Father to differ from the Son was dispensationally, in that God manifests Himself in different forms at different times and to different peoples. But these lawless bishops were afraid of Sabellianism, the logical extension of dispensationalism and of their Greek metaphysical paradigms; for the original intent of New Testament writers was that the Son differed from the Father even though one was in the other and the Father was seen through the Son. Thus, these bishops faced a conundrum that was most easily resolved through Arianism, where the vast majority of these bishops refused to go. Hence, the stage was set, by God, for the theological exile of the Church from heavenly Jerusalem, an exile like that of physically circumcised Israel from physical Jerusalem in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, an exile that followed by the Church being “put away” (i.e., separated from God) as Oholah and Oholibah [Samaria and Jerusalem, the capital cities of the house of Israel and the house of Judah] were women put away for adultery before being delivered into captivity. For when these lawless bishops turned to Emperor Constantine to resolve the issue of singleness, the Church, as a *put away* adulterer, was delivered into the hand of the prince of the world for the destruction of the flesh as Paul commanded the saints at Corinth to do with the man who was with his father's wife (1 Cor 5:5).

At Nicea, those theologians who should have been witnesses to the faith received from Christ Jesus became interpreters of it, instead. They, like the first Eve, believed the lie of the old dragon, Satan the devil, and they, as the woman, took to themselves authority to speak for the future Husband, Christ Jesus, when they were deceived. It is for this reason that the Pastor commands that the Woman be silent and learn from their Husband.

The faith of the first disciples was a form of Christianity later labeled heretical by Christendom after two centuries of councils moved Christian dogma away from Moses and towards Plato in the Eastern Churches and Aristotle in the Western Churches. Therefore, it is to John that disciples must look for understanding.

This subject will be continued in next Sabbath's reading.

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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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