

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 *Spiritual Israel and Marriage*.

Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of September 8, 2007

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.

Review of basic principles is continually necessary as new disciples are added to *Philadelphia*, with these new disciples coming from many different backgrounds and religious traditions. Some are highly educated; some are stymied by the language used in the commentaries in these Sabbath readings. Most have little experience in approaching the Bible as a book that can be read and understood by ordinary readers. Many of these new disciples retain skepticism about the Bible being the actual word of God. They want to believe—often they desperately want to believe—but how can anyone be certain that some texts haven't been lost, or that some are not myths. Herman Melville, author of *Moby Dick*, challenged the concept of whether any written text can be believed, for he demonstrated that the information a text gives can be taken back or called into question by the same text. And this is especially true of the Bible, as Melville was well aware.

The proof of the Bible is in its unity; in how it hangs together as the visible shadow of heavenly events; in how it functions as a metaphoric text for linguistic objects that are not of this world. The Bible reveals a story of how two were one and will again be one, with the relationship going from a lateral or side-by-side relationship to one that is vertical or hypostatic, but not as is usually taught.

In Scripture, common words are assigned two or more linguistic objects/meanings. The first object pertains to this world; the second set of objects pertains to the supra-dimensional heavenly realm. In this visible realm, the fruit of a tree can be eaten, but in the heavenly realm the fruit of the Spirit is desirable mental attributes. Eating forbidden or poisoned fruit in this realm kills the flesh whereas eating forbidden fruit in the heavenly realm kills the new creature born of Spirit that is a son of God.

In this realm, Babylon was a physical kingdom with a physical king that reigned over the geographical boundaries of pre-Flood Eden. But in the heavenly realm, Babylon is the single kingdom of this world, with Satan as its king. Its territory is not the geography of this world, but the mental topography of all living things, especially humanity which God consigned to disobedience because of Adam's transgression. Thus the prince of this world is the prince of the power of the air. He governs thoughts and attitudes. He is the

one ultimately responsible for a husband's addiction to pornography or for a wife's insubordination to her husband, both abominations to God. It is, however, the responsibility of every human being to root out these weedy thoughts and perverse impulses. Unfortunately, the person whose mind remains focused on the things of this world (the things of the flesh) will accommodate trashy thoughts and rebellious desires—and will even sing songs celebrating trashy women while professing belief in God. This ought not to be.

The primary principle of the mystery of God is that Scripture begins with marriage and ends with marriage. The so-called “P” creation account of Genesis 1:1 through Gen 2:3 is the abstract of the plan of God, not an account of the physical creation of the heavens and earth; for what portion of the heavens and earth is not created in verse 1? *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth* (Gen 1:1 — what hasn't been created: sun? moon? vegetation?). *In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with Theon, and the Logos was Theos. ... All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made* (John 1:1, 3). In the beginning were two [Θεόν & Θεός] who functioned as one as if married, with both being God, but with one being the Helpmate to the other and with this Helpmate creating all that physically exists. This Helpmate spoke only the words of the other both from atop Mount Sinai and when He came in flesh, not as God but as the only Son of *Theos*. Thus, when the divine Breath of God hovers as a bird setting a nest over the earth in Genesis 1:2, this creation account ceases being about the physical creation which the Helpmate completed in Genesis 1:1, and becomes about the spiritual creation of sons of God made in the image of, and after the likeness of *YHWH Elohim*, with these “sons” created male and female (Gen 1:26-27) to be glorified as “great” and “least” in the kingdom (Matt 5:19), with those judged *least* to serve those deemed *great*—and with both the *great* and the *least* to serve the Son as His helpmate.

Physical gender prevents easily grasping the concept that in the beginning was a marriage that ended when the Helpmate entered His creation as His only Son to die physically. The side-by-side relationship between Θεόν and Θεός ended when Θεός entered His creation as His Son (John 3:16); the relationship was no longer between two beings who were God and who functioned as one entity. Rather, the relationship became hypostatic, with the Father [Θεόν] who was previously unknown to Israel remaining in heaven but revealed by the Son of Θεός, Jesus of Nazareth, who became the Son of Θεόν when the divine Breath of Θεόν descended as a dove, lit and remained on the man Jesus (Matt 3:16-17). The relationship between the Father and Jesus became a foreshadowing of human beings, born of Spirit, having the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the grave (Rom 8:9, 11) dwelling within them; became a foreshadowing of what it means to be one with God as the Jesus was one with the Father.

The primary principle of Scripture beginning with marriage and ending with marriage extends to include the denial of those disciples who teach lawlessness regardless of their great works done in the name of Christ Jesus, and extends to exclude those who have no love for their fellow disciples; extends to exclude those who will not function as one Body with those whom the Father has drawn and Jesus has called. Many will be drawn and called in this era, but few will be chosen when judgments are revealed (Matt 22:14). The false grain [tares] has crowded out the wheat, thereby producing fields of worthless seed, shaken from the firm foundation the Apostle Paul laid (1 Co 3:10-11)

as if they were tumbleweeds blown about by every wind of doctrine, scattering their worthless seed into the darkest hearts that humankind has known where these worthless ones sprout disciples for the synagogue of Satan, each sprout imprisoned from birth between strands of barbed wire as if caught on roadside fields.

How does a disciple recognize other disciples who outwardly still appear as they did when they were sons of disobedience? What test is applicable?

If a self-identified disciple's mind is set on the flesh and on fleshly things and on fleshly fulfillment of biblical prophecies, the disciple is hostile to God (Rom 8:7). The disciple mentally remains in the flesh and remains unable to please God (*v.* 8) ... the test of genuine discipleship is whether the mind is set on the flesh, and on obtaining the things that pertain to the flesh, the desires of the flesh and pride in possessions (1 John 2:16). Thus, the person who keeps Sukkoth to learn to live as a king in the world to come (the message taught by the splintered Churches of God) has his or her mind set on the things of the flesh, and has missed the mark of discipleship. Likewise, the person who looks for nation to rise up against nation, famines, earthquakes, hurricanes—natural catastrophes of any sort—to fulfill endtime prophecies has his or her mind set on the things of the flesh. The theologian or prophecy pundit who causes new disciples to look at the unveiling events of the Middle East for fulfillment of prophecies about endtime Israel uses Jesus' name to deceive the Elect; for endtime Israel is not a physical nation as natural Israel was. Rather, it is a nation consisting of those who have circumcised hearts, not circumcised foreskins. It is a nation that keeps the commandments of God while dwelling in tents of flesh of every color, every social status and origin, with either indoor or outdoor plumbing. It is a nation that was not before a people; for until born of Spirit as sons of God this nation did not exist.

Sometimes it is easy to recognize when a person lacks divine birth through receipt of the Holy Spirit:

1. The person who refuses to keep the commandments remains hostile to God and has not been born of Spirit.
2. The person who says, *If you sow seed in my ministry, you will receive physical blessings*, has his or her mind set on the things of this world and is not of God.
3. The person who will not keep the high Sabbaths of God, insisting that they are mere shadows that can be ignored, has no citizenship in the Jerusalem above; for this person has not even visited that heavenly city.
4. The person who adds to Scripture by, especially, inserting Rome and the Roman Empire into Biblical prophecies lacks spiritual understanding and teaches his or her opinion, received from Satan, the father of all liars.
5. The person who uses deceitful business practices slanders God and is an abomination to the Church, and should rightfully be marked and excluded from Christian fellowship.
6. The person who flits from fellowship to fellowship, ever learning but never able to come to any fullness of knowledge, is a *Christian hobbyist* and lacks the stability that comes through being born of Spirit.
7. The person who has *an authority issue* [either refusal to submit to authority or the abuse of authority] will not submit to Christ and will not be glorified.

All authority comes from the Father, who has given it to whom He pleases to do a work for Him. He has given it to the husband in a marriage between believers; to those whom He has chosen to be apostles or prophets in the Church; and He gave it to Christ Jesus to judge His Body and Bride. Christ “chooses” whom He will marry.

The person who is hostile to God—who refuses to keep the commandments for any reason—does not look upward but outward and does not see God, but rather, sees the things of this world. This person does not believe God but other men, and this person teaches not the things of God but the traditions of men as he or she lives not by every word that has proceeded from the mouth of God but by his or her own determination of right and wrong. This person is today’s visible *Christian*, and this person is a tare, false grain, a servant of the prince of this world and part of the synagogue of Satan. And there is no earthly or heavenly reason for Christ to marry this person.

The pious smile and soft handshake of the pastor who preaches *love* to parishioners filling pews on Sunday morning is as the flickering tongue of a timber rattler, sensing prey easily devoured, the prey fascinated by the twitching fork upon which that old serpent, Satan the devil, will impale the innocence of babes, newly born sons of God, if at the end of this era God were to give the Holy Spirit to anyone prior to demonstrated obedience; prior to the person demonstrating love for God and Christ by keeping the commandments by faith. At the beginning of this era, the Holy Spirit was given to whomever the Father drew from this world, thereby dividing the waters of humanity between those born of Spirit and those not yet born a second time [day two of the “P” creation account]. But at the end, the waters remaining under the heaven must be parted by Moses and dry land formed, with disciples to bring forth seed and fruit from Moses [day three].

The only sign Jesus gave of coming from God is that of Jonah, who was three days and three nights [72 hours] in the belly of the great fish. After three days—the 15th, 16th, & 17th of Abib—Jesus was resurrected from the grave. Life was returned to His physical body. Likewise, after three days, life will return to His spiritual Body, crucified with Him at Calvary even though this spiritual Body did not come into existence until after He ascended to His God and Father ... no person other than the two thieves was or can be literally crucified with Christ. All who say that they have been crucified with Christ have been spiritually crucified (if they have been crucified at all). And those things that are of Spirit occur outside of time or space-time. By definition, they are not of the flesh.

The creation of the greater light of the fourth day, this light set for anointed times and made to rule over the light or “hot” portion of the day, occurs when Christ Jesus returns, bringing with Him the judgments of the saints and glorification of those deemed worthy to be younger siblings of Christ. It isn’t that woody trees, the subject of arborists, bring forth seed and fruit prior to the creation of the sun, but that disciples (who are to God in a spiritual hierarchy as trees are to human beings in the physical hierarchy) bring forth the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) prior to glorification, with this fruit grown on the dry land that comes when Moses parts the waters ... twice *Yah* told Moses that He intended to make of Moses a great nation. Twice Moses protested, and God allowed greater Israel to continue in existence. But Moses’ protestations did not change the mind of God, who then and now intends to make of Moses a great nation as disclosed through the analogy of Jonah, who did not walk over the waters as Jesus did, nor ride over the waters as Noah did, but was swallowed by the great fish, a type of God, with Jonah spewed from the mouth of this great fish after three days and nights.

- Jonah was, for the people of Nineveh, an apparent spokesman coming from this city's god, Dagon.
- Jesus was, for the people of Israel, the spokesman coming from this nation's God, *YHWH Elohim*.
- The two witnesses will be, for the peoples of this world, spokesmen coming from the Father and His Son to all nations, with these two witnesses possessing power over this world as Moses and Aaron possessed power over Pharaoh and his magicians.

Note: As Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh to ask for Israel's release from bondage, the two witnesses will ask the prince of this world to release all of humankind from bondage to sin and death; and as Pharaoh denied the requests of Moses and Aaron, the prince of this world will deny the requests of the two witnesses. Therefore, as God slew the firstborns of Egypt not covered by a paschal lamb, from Pharaoh's house down to the stalls of serfs, God will again slay, or allow to be slain by releasing the four death angels, a third part of humankind shortly before Babylon falls, thereby releasing all of humanity from servitude to sin when Satan is cast from heaven and the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man.

But before Satan's Babylon is no more to never rise again halfway through the seven endtime years, the firstborns of this world that are not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God will be slain as spiritually circumcised Israel is released from bondage to indwelling sin and death in a manner analogous to how physically circumcised Israel was released from physical bondage.

Therefore, a third of humankind is slain twice, once at the beginning of the seven endtime years and again near the middle of these seven years—and the many false prophets of Israel will incorrectly identify the slaying of firstborns at the second Passover as the slaying of a third of humankind in the sixth Trumpet Plague, and these many false prophets will deceive many.

1. The event that immediately precedes the seven endtime years of tribulation is not a war or even a series of natural disasters, but the slaying of firstborns not covered by the blood of Christ, with these firstborns representing a third of the world's population. This massive loss of life will look like an act of God, and will temporarily turn the world's attention away from the things of the flesh and to God.
2. The Tribulation begins when the world blames those who are identifiably of God through their outward Sabbath observance for this massive loss of life. There will be no shortage of blame to assign to the world's 50 million Sabbatarians.
3. The majority of spiritually circumcised "Israel" will rebel against God 220 days after the second Passover liberation of this nation from sin and death through empowerment by the Holy Spirit.
4. But with the spiritually circumcised nation's rebellion comes the grafting of the natural branches back to the root of righteousness by these branches' faith and through their unwavering Sabbath observance.
5. During the first 1260 days of the Tribulation the loss of life within Israel, Observant Judaism and Sabbatarian Christendom, will be so great that only the 144,000 of natural Judaism and the remnant of Sabbatarian Christendom

will physically enter into the second half of the seven endtime years of tribulation.

6. As the 144,000 will follow Christ wherever He leads during the last 1260 days, the third part of humankind (from Zech 13:9) will follow the remnant as it leads in enduring to the end by not taking the mark of the beast [χξς'] but trusting in God to supply those who are now His with their physical needs.
7. For most of Israel faithful to God, the place of physical safety during the Tribulation will be the grave.

The Father resurrected Jesus from the grave after three days and three nights. He rescued Jesus from death, the darkness that the *Logos* Himself had created when He brought all things into existence. Likewise, the Father will resurrect disciples from the grave after three days, the first three days of the “P” creation account. He will physically rescue disciples from death, with those disciples who heard Jesus’ words and who believed the Father not coming into judgment but passing from death to life by Jesus causing the mortal flesh to put on immortality.

Genuine disciples in this era are spokespersons for God going outward to this world—and until the second Passover, they will no more be believed by Israel than Sadducees and Pharisees believed Jesus. However, once the second Passover occurs, for seven months they will be believed as Jonah was believed.

- As spokespersons for God, disciples are the Helpmate for Christ Jesus, the Spokesman for the Father.
- But what sort of a Helpmate is the one who speaks falsely about God?
- Visible Christendom, with its mind and focus on things of the flesh, doesn’t know God and blasphemes God by denying the divinity of the Son prior to Calvary (Arian Christianity), or by assigning personhood to the Breath of God (Trinitarian Christianity). In both cases, visible Christendom speaks falsely about God.

The claim of Scripture is that God [Θεός – in Roman characters, *Theos*] is the Creator of all that is. This claim is accepted by faith by those who are disciples. Evidence used to prove this claim can, as easily, be used to refute this claim. Although evidence of a sudden creation is extent in the geological record, this evidence is also used to support the Big Bang Theory.

Three *visible* religions claim to be “people of the Book” and to descend from the patriarch Abraham, two through physical descent [Islam and Judaism] and one through spiritual descent [Christianity]. These three have fought each other as jealous siblings from their beginnings. So the promise made to Abraham that the deity he worshiped would make of him one great nation (Gen 12:2) has not been fulfilled by these *visible* religions that are not one physical or spiritual nation.

God [*Theos*] revealed Himself to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus said that this *Theos* is the God of the living, not the dead (Matt 22:32)¹. And “the living” is all those who have either been born of Spirit or have the promise of inheriting eternal life. Jesus said, “For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will” (John 5:21) ... if the Father raises the dead, to whom does the Son give life? Can he give life to those who are already alive?

¹ Gr: Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ Θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ ὁ Θεὸς Ἰσαὰκ καὶ ὁ Θεὸς Ἰακώβ – or in English, “I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob” (Matt 22:32)

The mystery of God is that the Father gives life to the dead through receipt of His divine Breath, and then the Son, to whom all judgment has been given, will give “life” to those who are alive in a tent of flesh through the perishable flesh putting on immortality. So both the Father and the Son must give life to a disciple before this son of God receives a glorified body. Therefore, the Son does, indeed, give life to whom He chooses, with those whom he chooses being determined by their judgment. So it is not enough to be born of Spirit. A person must also put on immortality or the person will perish in fire.

The power to give life is the power of God. No person has spiritual life until the Father gives this life to the person through Him raising the person from the dead by a second birth by Spirit. *Eternal life is the gift of God* (Rom 6:23), not something inherited from the person’s human father. To say otherwise reveals the extent to which the person believes the serpent’s lie first told to Eve that she would not surely die.

The *Theos* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the *Logos* who, in the beginning, was with God [*Theon*] and who was God [*Theos*] (again, John 1:1-2). This *Theos* came as His Son, His only (John 3:16), to be born as the man Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:14). He became the Son of the Father [*Theon*] when the divine Breath of the Father [*Pneuma Agion*] descended upon Him as a dove (Matt 3:16-17) and gave the man Jesus a second birth as the beloved son of the Father—again, Jesus came as His own Son, and He became the Son of the Father when the Holy Spirit descended upon Him as a dove. And in this model, Jesus fulfilled all righteousness (v. 15).

Note: Greek uses grammatical gender. A masculine singular noun in nominative case takes the /os/ case ending, whereas a neuter singular noun takes the /on/ case ending. *Theos* and *Theon* cannot be the same entity or deity. The *Logos* [Λόγος], using the masculine singular case ending, is *Theos*, a noun that also uses the masculine singular ending. But *Theon* [Θεόν] does not use the masculine singular ending, but the neuter singular ending.

The man Jesus of Nazareth came as *Theos*’ only Son to reveal the Father [*Theon*] to those whom the Father has made spiritually alive through receipt of His divine Breath after the pattern through which Jesus fulfilled all righteousness ... the world did not know the Father before Jesus came to reveal Him, and does not know the Father now (John 17:25). Again, Jesus revealed the Father to the firstfruits in an age quickly drawing to a close. And to this must be added that the world does not now know Christ Jesus, the beginning and the end (Rev 22:13) that was concealed by the creation (Eccl 3:11). But those whom the Father has raised from the dead—to repeat, they were spiritually dead even though they were physically living—know the Father because the man Jesus made the Father known to His first disciples who, by their testimonies coupled to the testimonies of Moses and the Prophets, reveal what could not be known through actions of the flesh.

Returning to the primary mystery of God, in the beginning were two who functioned as one as if married: “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness’” (Gen 1:26); “So God created man in his own image ... male and female he created them” (v. 27); “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen 2:24). A visible, physical man and a woman as one flesh, therefore, reveal the invisible, spiritual things of God, with these invisible attributes being that in the beginning were two [*Theos & Theon*] who functioned as one spirit. Thus, the assignment of singularity [as opposed to “unity” producing one] to the two reveals that the person knows neither Christ Jesus nor the Father.

- The numeral *one* can represent either singularity, what it most often represents in English, or it can represent unity. However, it makes no sense to assign singularity to Jesus' use of "one" in His prayer to His Father (John chap 17); thus, the assignment of unity to the numeral takes precedence in Scripture over singularity.
- Monotheism as understood by Judaism becomes a problematic concept as martyred disciples in the 1st-Century discovered; for God is "one" not in number but in absolute unity. The problem of a paradox would otherwise cause gridlock in the timeless heavenly realm.

The two who were in the beginning are disclosed in the Hebrew linguistic icons used for God: *Elohim* and the Tetragrammaton *YHWH*. In Hebrew, the word or linguistic icon for /God/ is *El* as in *El Shaddai* or "God Almighty" (from Gen 17:1). *Elohim*, now, is the regular plural [the "im" ending] of *Eloah*, the linguistically singular noun, and *Eloah* deconstructs to /El/+ /ah/, with the /ah/ radical representing "breath," either vocalized or aspirated. Thus, *Elohim* is /El/+ /ah/ + /El/+ /ah/ an undetermined number of times. But the Tetragrammaton gives the multiple: two. For *YHWH* deconstructs to /YH/ or *Yah* (see Ps 146:1a; 148:1a; 149:1a in Heb.) and /WH/, with the /H/ again linguistically representing "Breath." So what is grammatically seen is that the *Logos* who was *Theos*, with His Breath or Spirit, is *Yah*, whom Moses and the seventy saw (Ex 24:9-11); for no human being has seen the Father or *Theon* (John 1:18) at any time. And what the creation or eternity [Heb: *olam*] has concealed (again, Eccl 3:11) is that in the beginning was a marriage that ended with the death of *Theos*, the Helpmate to *Theon*, when He entered His creation as His only Son, and in the end will be the marriage of the glorified Son to glorified disciples, who will be in the position of "helpmate" to the One who was *Theos*. With pedagogical redundancy, disciples must understand that the narrative of Scripture begins with marriage and ends with marriage.

The first disciples heard the words of the man Jesus with their ears as did the scribes and Pharisees. These words were controlled modulations of air: they were moving air, *pneuma*, the Greek linguistic icon borrowed by English speakers as a root for common words such as "pneumatic tools" and "pneumonia." To a 1st-Century Greek speaker, *pneuma* was either deep breath or wind or an invisible force.

The Greek modifier *hagios/hagion* would translate as the English icon "holy." In Greek, an apostrophe before the first vowel if a capital or above if lower case indicates rough breathing; thus /ha/ would be written as /há/, or as /A/.

The Greek icon phrase /Πνεύμα Ἅγιον/, written in Roman characters as *Pneuma Ἅgion*, would be neuter singular from the *on* case ending, and this ending agrees with *Theon*. As such the Holy Spirit is the divine Breath of the Father and could be translated as Breath Holy or Wind Holy or Spirit Holy. All would be valid translations. This Breath or Wind or Spirit is not that of *Theos*, the *Logos* ... in inscription the Breath of *Theos* which would be written as /Πνεύμα Ἅγιος/, but in Scripture this Breath is only seen after the man Jesus had His former glory returned to Him (John 17:5), and it is seen in the icon phrase as /Πνεύμα Χριστου/, translated as the "Spirit of Christ" (Rom 8:9). And this Breath of Christ has to, by context, be different from the Breath of the Father seen in the icon phrase /Πνεύμα του γείραντος Ἰησοῦν κ νεκρων/, translated as the "Spirit of the (One) raising Jesus from (the) dead" (Rom 8:11). So the Apostle Paul writes of two Spirits or Breaths, one that belongs to Jesus (*v.* 9) and one that belongs to the Father, who resurrected Jesus from the dead (*v.* 11). Paul consistently addresses the

Father and the Son in his epistles, while never sending greetings to the saints from a third personage—and Paul separates the Spirit of Christ from the Spirit of the Father, which is the Spirit by which the Father raises the dead (again, John 5:21). So for Paul, the Holy Spirit [*Pneuma 'Agion*] does not have personhood but is a force in the heavenly realm that equates to physical breath or wind in this physical realm.

In the beginning God was two who functioned as one as if the two were married. The creation concealed the existence of the second entity from physically circumcised Israel even though the plural pronoun is properly used in Genesis 1:26 [“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness”]; in Genesis 3:22 [“Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil”]; and in Genesis 11:7 [“Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech”]. But the only place where *Theon* is seen with clarity in the Old Testament is as the Ancient of Days in Daniel’s vision (7:9-10).

Personhood was not assigned to the divine Breath of God until the 5th Century CE. It was an errant assignment, not made by saints who heard the voice of Jesus but by tares pandering to the Roman Emperor. The triune deity [the Trinity] of the visible Christian Church is a construct that sprang from the heads of men as the Greek goddess Athena sprang from the forehead of Zeus. And Arian Christians [Unitarians] deny the divinity of Christ by teaching that the Father, *Theon*, created all that is. So both Trinitarians and Unitarians blaspheme the Father and the Son, which will be forgiven them if they do not also commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit by taking sin back into themselves after being liberated from indwelling sin and death.

- The visible Christian Church has, worldwide, blasphemed the name of God as physically circumcised Israel profaned the name of God wherever it went.
- The name *Allah* is the Arabic equivalent to the Hebrew *Eloah*, so followers of Mohammad have no knowledge of the Father. Their minds remain set on the flesh and on physical things.

The most telling doctrine for determining spiritual understanding is whether the person believes that human beings are born with immortal souls ... the person who has truly been born of Spirit knows that humans are not born with immortal souls, for everlasting life is the gift of God through Christ Jesus. It is only those who have not been truly born of Spirit who believe that they have immortal souls.

So the test for identifying genuine disciples has two central aspects: (1) does the person keep the commandments and teach others to do likewise (this includes relaxing a commandment and being called least, but does not include deliberately breaking a commandment); and (2) does the person acknowledge that everlasting life is the gift of God. There is one other essential aspect: (3) does the person profess that Jesus came in the flesh, fully man, flesh and blood, and gave up all divinity when born of Mary. If the person insists that Jesus was fully man and fully God, the person is a fraud and is without knowledge of God. For unless *Theos* ceased to exist as God, entering His creation as only a man, He would not be free to marry another but would remain married to *Theon*. And unless His flesh and blood died on the cross and was utterly dead, He would not be free to marry another in this world but would remain married to physically circumcised Israel. He had to “die” twice [once when entering His creation as His Son, and once at Calvary] before He was free to marry the Church upon His return as the Messiah.

Marriages between human beings are not to be ended for light and trivial reasons, but *Theos* divorced Israel and ended their marriage when He sent Jerusalem into Babylonian captivity. Nevertheless, He was not free to marry another [because He was still married to Israel in this earthly realm, He would not have married Mary Magdalene while here as a man] until after He died at Calvary. Likewise, disciples will not marry in the heavenly realm for they are already married to Christ and are one with Christ, the only means by which they can enter heaven where all function in timelessness as one entity.

The person who has problems with authority will find fault with “one” primarily representing unity rather than absolute singleness; for this person has established his or her opinions as the test of knowledge of God.

The Apostle Paul had problems with people who questioned his authority, and he said that if anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual that he should acknowledge that the things Paul wrote were commands from the Lord (1 Co 14:37). What is seen today? The things that Paul wrote are inverted and twisted backwards so that through Paul’s epistles lawlessness reigns throughout visible Christendom. Yes, the lawless have twisted Paul’s epistles into instruments of their own destruction (2 Pet 3:15-17).

But the lawless do not look like disciples of Christ Jesus: it is Sabbatarian Christians who deal deceitfully with others for whom no good test exists to reveal their lack of spirituality prior to engaging in business with them. Today, marking and shunning are not effective means of excluding from fellowships these false disciples, who as wolves go out and gather other flocks to themselves that they can devour at their leisure. So Paul gave one further test to separate false from true: if the one who would teach asks for tithes and offerings, the person is false (2 Co 11:7-15). A teacher can accept an offering, and brethren have the responsibility to make sure that the needs of those who teach are being met, but the one who teaches needs to keep his hands in his own pockets and out of the pockets of the sheep.

A teacher denies that what Paul wrote were commands from the Lord when he or she asks for tithes to be given to him or her. By asking for money, the teacher reveals that his or her mind is set on those things of the flesh; that the teacher lacks faith in God—and if lacking in faith, the teacher lacks belief and should not be teaching, a Catch-22 situation that discloses the falsity of most Sabbatarian teachers and preachers.

Again, those who learn have the responsibility to make sure that the needs of those who teach are being met, either through the work of the hands of those who teach or by offerings. And those who teach have the responsibility to work with their hands or at their vocations to provide for themselves and their households as best they can. It doesn’t take a week to write a sermon or to visit a widow. Teaching on the Sabbath is not laboring day and night as Paul labored for six days a week. Historically, there have been too many lazy teachers delivering false messages within Christendom, including among Sabbatarians. This needs to stop. Therefore, let every teacher within the Church today acknowledge that what Paul wrote are commands from the Lord, and that one of these commands is that teachers as well as parishioners labor with their hands and at their vocations to support those of their households. Let the pampered ministry of the many splinters of the Churches of God show that they are doing the work of God through actively preaching repentance to a lawless world. Then after doing a week of discernable work, let them accept what offerings are voluntarily extended to them, with them never

again seeking to extort tithes from those too poor to freely give. And let those who ask for tithes perish with their greed.

Disciples are living stones built into a spiritual house (1 Pet 2:5), its foundation laid by the Apostle Paul (1 Co 3:10-11), with Christ Jesus being the chosen and precious cornerstone. Thus, disciples are, today, the living temple of God (*vv.* 16-17), built when the *stones* [i.e., religious leaders] of Herod's temple were cast down at Calvary. Disciples are the temple built after three days. And herein lays the problem with tithing: natural Israelites paid tithes on the 1st, 2nd, 4th, and 5th years of a seven year cycle to the temple. The temple didn't pay tithes to itself.

Although Levities—the priesthood—received the tithes of Israel, these same Levities returned a tenth of the tithe (a tithe of the tithe) back to Israel so that everyone could eat of the tithe when Israel came to Jerusalem to keep the high Sabbaths of God (Deut 14:22-27). Israel was to remember the Levite within its town, for the tribe of Levi received no land inheritance when Israel entered the Promised Land. Rather, God had taken the tribe of Levi from among Israel in lieu of taking the firstborn of every Israelite womb. By election, the Levites represented the firstborn of Israel that belonged to God. Physically, the Levities were to God prior to Calvary what disciples have been since, for as the Levitical priesthood served in a temple of stone and wood, the new creature born of Spirit that dwells in a tent of flesh serves God in that tent of flesh, making the fleshly bodies of disciples analogous to the stone structure of the temple and making the new creature or new nature analogous to the Levite within the temple. Hence, disciples are a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9), with Christ Jesus being the High Priest.

- Typologically, the Levitical priesthood from Moses to Calvary forms the lively shadow of disciples from the Wave Sheaf Offering to the Second Advent.
- In the Millennium when the Levitical priesthood is returned to its office, with the exception of the sons of Zadok, God will cause the Levitical priesthood to bear the punishment of Israel, “[b]ecause they ministered to [Israel] before their idols and became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel” (Ezek 44:12).

As the Levitical priesthood served idols during the reign of Israel and Judah's idolatrous kings, the visible Christian Church has served idols and demons while teaching lawlessness to babes; thus, those disciples who have relaxed the least of the commandments will be called least in the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:19) while those who have taught iniquity will be denied in their resurrection and will go into the lake of fire (Matt 7:21-23). And one of those previously concealed things of God is that those disciples who have practiced lawlessness and have taught others to be lawless will bear the punishment of Israel as bulls and goats bore the punishment of Israel until Calvary; those who relaxed the commandments will bear their being called *least* as the Levitical priesthood will bear the punishment of Israel by being butchers in the Millennium.

The first problem encountered when a disciple approaches tithing—or rather, teaches about tithing—is determining how the Levitical priesthood tithed; for one of the idols that the visible Church has served is money/gold. The Church used its ecclesiastical authority to divert, say, half the wealth of medieval Europe into its coffers. It transformed “grace” into an idol when it sold indulgences. At no time in ancient Israel's history was the Levitical priesthood more corrupt than the visible Church was corrupt in the first four centuries of the second millennium of this Common Era.

So sufficient tests exist for disciples to determine who is and who isn't genuine in this era ... all who place emphasis on the flesh and the things of the flesh are false and should be avoided. Keeping the commandments are a matter of faith for the genuine disciple, who knows that everlasting life is the gift of God, who is not one or three but the Father and the Son, with the narrative of Scripture being about marriage.

Enough for one Sabbath: the task of all who are genuine in this era is to preach repentance as John the Baptist preached repentance, with this preaching in a wilderness that emphasizes the flesh being a preparation for Christ Jesus' return as the Messiah. Thus, all who are of *Philadelphia* are encouraged to sally forth as if jousting with windmills, knowing beforehand that lawlessness cannot be defeated until the prince of this world is cast down, but also knowing that every disciple made for Christ Jesus brings to the one who preaches repentance treasure in heaven and satisfaction in this world.

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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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