

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 baptism.

[Printable/viewable PDF format to display Greek or Hebrew characters](#)

Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of December 27, 2014*

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.

And they came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to Him, and they said to Him, "By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?" Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man? Answer me." And they discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But shall we say, 'From man?'"—they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet. So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things." (Mark 11:27–33)

1.

The baptism of John in water and for repentance, the figurative death of the old self by changing how the person lives life, differs from the baptism of Jesus as the left hand differs from the right hand; for the baptism of Jesus is into "life," where the person lives a new life, not simply a changed or repentant life—a new life as a servant of obedience to God in this world but as a son of God outside of the creation. And this new "life" is the invisible, non-physical reality of being twice born; of being born from above, being born anew, being born again. This new life comes via the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] having entered the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] when Jesus fulfilled all righteousness (Matt 3:15) by being baptized in the Jordan by John, which in turn enters [penetrates as a husband does his wife for purposes of procreation] the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou 'anthropou*] thereby bringing to life what was dead in a resurrection like that when the Father's spirit in the bodily form of a dove descended upon and entered into [*eis*] the man Jesus (Mark 1:10). Thus what Paul wrote is descriptive of this spiritual birth: Christ is the Head of every disciple as a man is the

head of his wife, and God is the Head of Christ as a man is the head of his wife (1 Cor 11:3), with the circumcised [made naked] head of the Israelite male penetrating the uncircumcised woman [and unable to be circumcised: so-called Islamic female circumcision is mutilation of the woman's genital that deprives the woman from experiencing sexual satisfaction which the circumcised male still enjoys] so as to father a son [or daughter] for himself, this son growing to physically be in his father's likeness as a son of God will grow to be in the spiritual likeness of God the Father. But all growth has to occur in this physical world where change is not only possible, but mandated by the passage of time that has one moment decaying into the next moment, thereby transforming the context of the moment that gives meaning to signs and symbols encountered in each moment.

For a human infant—as with infants of great apes—a photo of the parent is the parent. The infant bestows on the photo affection usually reserved for the parent alone. However, it doesn't take long before the human infant recognizes that the photo isn't the parent, but is a lifeless likeness of the parent ... likewise, an infant son of God will “see” the Bible as the Word of God. It shouldn't [but sometime does] take long for this newly born son of God to realize that the Bible is merely a likeness of the Word of God, a damaged likeness through human tampering, human inscription generation after generation. It shouldn't take long for the son of God to realize that the Word of God is the Logos [*o Logos*] who was God [*Theos*] and was with the God [*ton Theon*] in primacy [*arche*] before entering His creation as His unique Son, Christ Jesus. It shouldn't take a truly born of spirit son of God long to realized that the Word of God is not a book written by men. Unfortunately a great many Christians have not truly been born again and never realize that the Bible is merely a child's learning tool, as the Law of God written on stone tablets was an instructional aid; that the law need not be written anywhere but on the heart of the person, with *<heart>* used as an euphemistic expression for the inner self, the spirit of the person in the soul [*psuche*] of the person.

It shouldn't take a son of God long to abandon *line-upon-line, here-a-little, there-a-little* biblical exegesis. It shouldn't take long for a son of God to believe Paul that the visible, physical things of this world reveal and precede the invisible, spiritual things of God (*cf.* Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 15:46) after the pattern of Hebraic thought-couplet poetry. It shouldn't take a son of God long to begin practicing typological exegesis, which will have the physical things of this world—in the case at hand, John's baptism by water for repentance—preceding and revealing the spiritual things of God, Jesus' baptism in spirit and into life. And as John's baptism represented real death (real repentance, the reason for John, in Matthew's Gospel, to sharply rebuke Sadducees and Pharisees coming to him to be baptized) without the physical body experiencing death, Jesus' baptism represents receiving real “life” without the physical body experiencing this life ... the physical body is nothing more than a clay vessel in which the non-tangible inner self of the person dwells, a reality that opens to potentially embracing all sorts of logical abuses as if the king were wearing his new clothes.

The son of God truly born of spirit will have within this son of God the mind of Christ Jesus just as a human infant has within him or her the mind of man. But as a human infant doesn't think the thoughts of adults, the infant son of God doesn't think the thoughts of God—and as a human infant cannot know how far his or her thoughts are

from the thoughts of the infant's parents, the infant son of God doesn't know how far his thoughts are from the thoughts of God. The infant can only know what the infant perceives and is able to analyze and logically consider. Said figuratively, an infant like his or her parents only sees with the person's own eyes. Thus, if a human person cannot see the things of God that are plainly discernible by the things that have been made, the person is spiritually blind and in need of Christ Jesus anointing the eyes of the person's heart.

The above leads to the author of Luke's Gospel and of Acts, who never fully understood John's baptism and certainly never experienced the baptism of Jesus. If he had, he would not have written without understanding; he would not have written about the direct transfer of the Holy Spirit through laying on of hands ...

In their spiritual blindness or, for others, their spiritual infancy, a great many members of the former Worldwide Church of God were baptized in water—submersed as is appropriate—then raised from these baptismal waters and had hands laid upon them and a prayer of faith said over them ... the newly baptized expected to receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, commanded to come upon the person through baptism and the laying on of hands according to the teaching of the author of Acts' *Paul*, a fictionalized likeness to the Apostle:

And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. There were about twelve men in all. (Acts 19:1–7)

Of all who were baptized by ministers of Herbert Armstrong, how many—when hands were laid on them—began speaking in tongues and prophesying? Not one. Does this mean that none of those Believers baptized by Armstrong's ministers receive the Holy Spirit; that Armstrong's baptism was like the baptism of John, for repentance, and not like the baptism of Paul? No, not at all. It means that what the author of Acts writes is fiction that elevates his heroine [his Apostle Paul] to possessing divine-like attributes in the Sophist novel he writes, thereby giving to Paul qualities that even Peter didn't have.

But this author, having redacted books and witness accounts [the oral Christian tradition] of Christ Jesus, in his novel makes a distinction between the baptism of John and its chiral image, the baptism of Jesus, which was like the baptism of John but with the addition of the laying on of hands and receipt of the Holy Spirit that caused these twelve to speak in tongues and prophesy ...

What does it mean to prophesy when the spirit comes upon a person? Does the newly baptized person begin to deliver a sermon, a prophet statement about a person or a nation? If this is the case, then the truly born of spirit son of God should rebuke this evil spirit in the name of Christ and command the spirit to be silent. For the newly baptized person who, upon the laying on of hands, begins to speak in tongues and prophesy has been possessed by a demon ... does a human infant, when newly born,

begin to speak foreign languages and to declare the fate of nations? No, the infant bawls, traumatized by the brightness and the coldness and loudness of its new environment. And the infant sons of God figuratively “bawl,” crying out to God in “give-me” prayers, repeating their prayers as if God were deaf.

It would be theologically safe at this point to declare the baptism of Jesus to be water baptism followed by the laying on of hand with a prayer of faith declared while hands were on the person. This is the baptism of Herbert Armstrong, a condensed form (in that a person is submerged in water only once) of 19th-Century Anabaptists’ Believer’s Baptism. But any such declaration ignores Jesus baptizing all Christians in the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*] at the Second Passover liberation of Israel, or of the glorified Son of Man baptizing all flesh [all living creatures] (from Joel 2:28) in the spirit of God when dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and his angels and given to the Son of Man halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation.

Safe isn’t *safe* when a thing isn’t true: was Paul baptized in water before or after he received the Holy Spirit according to the Sophist author of Acts?

Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, and *he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.*" But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." So Ananias departed and entered the house. And *laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."* And immediately *something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized;* and taking food, he was strengthened. (Acts 9:3–19)

Paul did not have hands laid upon him after baptism, but before, with Ananias linking Paul physically receiving his sight to Paul being filled with the Holy Spirit ... but Paul himself doesn’t claim to be filled with the Holy Spirit:

For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So *now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.* For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.

Now *if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.* So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. (Rom 7:14–23 emphasis added)

The Sophist author of Acts didn't understand spiritual birth; for he hadn't been born of spirit. And Paul didn't understand that there would be a Second Passover liberation of Israel through all of Israel being filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God. This Sophist author of Luke's Gospel and Acts would not have written what he did or as he did if he had been born of spirit ... the author of Matthew's Gospel wrote fiction, but fiction to reveal theological truths that could not be easily presented and that would have been impossible to preserve otherwise. This is not the case with Luke and Acts.

Christians within the greater Church speak of being *filled with spirit* when they know no more about the subject than did the Sophist author of Acts ...

The baptism of Jesus is the emersion of human persons in the spirit of God so that the person is "filled" with spirit as a clay cup is filled with water so that nothing else can be put into the cup that doesn't "fit" between water molecules without splashing any water out of the cup. In the case of the Holy Spirit filling the inner self of the person, the only thing that will fit in the inner self without figuratively splashing out some of the Holy Spirit and thereby committing blasphemy against the spirit is knowledge, especially knowledge of God.

It would not harm a Christian filled with spirit to learn Koine Greek, and see with the Christian's own eyes that the Pastoral Epistles ARE NOT of the Apostle Paul, but are of an impostor claiming to be Paul. Thus, when the Christian pastor cites 1 Timothy "to prove" that women are to remain silent in Christian services, the Christian with knowledge will know that he or she ought not fellowship in the assembly of this pastor for the pastor is without knowledge. The Christian with knowledge and the Christian without knowledge really have no shared language in which they can speak to one another about theological subjects. They can speak to each other about basketball or about automobiles, but not about God.

And the problem of attempting to give spiritual understanding to the one without such understanding can be seen in Peter going to Cornelius:

So Peter opened his mouth and said: "*Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.* As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. *For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God.* Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days. (Acts 10:34–48 emphasis added)

Does *being acceptable to God* have any connection to being born of spirit or being filled with spirit? Not according to Paul:

For God shows no partiality. For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. *For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.* For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. ...

For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God. (Rom 2:11–16, 25–29)

The person who *fears God and does what is right* shows that the work of the Law has been written on the person's heart, with their consciences bearing witness for and against the person when God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus ... but the person born of spirit in this present era never comes under judgment: "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (John 5:24).

The person who does what is right must—if born of spirit—desire to keep the Commandments of God. It is not enough to *want* to do what is right if there is no ontological presence of this *want* manifested by the person—

But before getting farther from what our Sophist author had his *Peter* say to Cornelius, how this *Peter* said what he allegedly said needs addressed: according to John the Elder as recorded by Bishop Papias and cited by Eusebius (Third Book), what our Sophist author has his *Peter* say IS NOT how Peter taught believers or unbelievers. Even in what Paul said about Peter's teachings when Paul wrote to the holy ones in Galatia (Gal 2:14), the above is not a reasonable transcription of any words Peter would have spoken.

According to John the Elder, Peter taught via *chreiai* ... *And Jesus said, "Bring me a denarius and let me look at it. Whose likeness and inscription is this?" And Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."*

So how would Peter have taught Cornelius?

And Jesus said, "Hear me, and understand: There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him." So it matters not that Pharisees teach it is unlawful for a Jew to visit a Gentile" and Peter would have gone from there to explicate the words and teachings of Jesus, citing things Jesus did and things Jesus said to support the points he was making, never saying that His disciples were commanded to speak of the things He did except as Jesus told them to speak, with Peter citing Jesus' words through which His disciples had the authority to be witnesses for Him.

Peter would not have ventured far from words he hear Jesus speak. If he had not heard Jesus speak about Joel the prophet's words pertaining to receiving the spirit of God, he would not have cited Joel's words—and if he had heard Jesus speak of Joel's testimony, he would have quoted what Jesus said so as not to say what was factually wrong as is recorded in Acts chapter two.

Perhaps what the Sophist author of Acts wrote in chapter two needs to be cited in part; for the citation from Acts chapter ten needs to be placed alongside what "the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter" had witnesses on Pentecost:

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" (Acts 2:1–12)

The Sophist author of Acts has the first disciples receiving the spirit of God in a different manner and at a different time than does the author of John's Gospel:

On the evening of that day, [*te mia Sabbaton — the first (after) Sabbath*], the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. *As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.*" And when He had said this, *He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive [pneuma 'agion — spirit holy]. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."* (John 20:19–23 emphasis added)

By Jesus *breathing* His breath [*pneuma Christou*] onto ten of His disciples—and by His disciples inadvertently breathing in Jesus' breath that He breathed on them, these ten disciples received holy spirit, holy breath in which the spirit of the Father dwelt, thereby causing these ten to be born of spirit through the indwelling of Christ Jesus in the form of His breath ...

In Acts, the Sophist author has the Holy Spirit sounding like a violent wind [*pnoes*] filling the house (Acts 2:2), but this author doesn't stop here: in Matthew's Gospel, John the Baptist said that Jesus would baptize with spirit and fire (Matt 3:11, also Luke 3:16, apparently copied from Matthew's Gospel for Mark's Gospel says nothing about being baptized with fire), thus cloven tongues of fire appeared among the disciples and rested on each of them ...

When will Jesus, as King of kings and Lord of lords, baptize all flesh with fire?

For behold, [*YHWH*] will come in fire, and his chariots like the whirlwind, to render His anger in fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire will [*YHWH*] enter into judgment, and by His sword, with all flesh; and those slain by [*YHWH*] shall be many. Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go into the gardens, following one in the midst, eating pig's flesh and the abomination and mice, shall come to an end together, declares [*YHWH*]. For I know their works and their thoughts, and the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and shall see my glory, and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory among the nations. And they shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to [*YHWH*], on horses and in chariots and in litters and on mules and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says [*YHWH*], just as the Israelites bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of [*YHWH*]. And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says [*YHWH*]. For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says [*YHWH*], so shall your offspring and your name remain. From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares [*YHWH*]. And they shall go out and look on the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." (Isa 66:15–24)

*

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. (Rev 21:1–2)

Christ Jesus will baptize the world in fire after the Thousand Years of His reign as King of kings and Lord of lords ... Christ Jesus will indeed baptize all flesh in spirit when He receives dominion over the single kingdom of this world at the beginning of the Thousand Years. He will baptize all in spirit when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28).

The account in Acts 2 is not, however, a genuine accounting of the shadow or type [chiral image] of the reality; for the fireworks involved preceding and leading up to when dominion is taken from the Adversary and given to the Son of Man are necessary for otherwise this monumental change might be overlooked—

The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, and these were thrown upon the earth. And a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up. The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. A third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the

springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the water, because it had been made bitter. The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light might be darkened, and a third of the day might be kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night. (Rev 8:7–12)

And,

And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of [YHWH] comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of [YHWH] shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as [YHWH] has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom [YHWH] calls. (Joel 2:30–32)

For when the world is baptized in spirit, the non-physical spirit of God will not be seen. Hail and fire can be seen, but spirit cannot be seen. Columns of smoke can be seen. A meteor falling into the ocean, looking like a flaming mountain can be seen, but spirit cannot be seen.

When the world was baptized in water and into death in the days of Noah, the water could be seen. But when the world is baptized in non-physical spirit, there is nothing, nothing to signify to human persons why their thoughts have suddenly changed unless this baptism is “signified” through unusual signs on earth and above the earth, something the Sophist author of Luke and Acts didn’t understand.

The world being baptized in fire is a different story ... after the Thousand Years, the Adversary will be loosed for a short while: three and a half years. And the Adversary will bring upon humanity great calamity in that very short while before the coming of the new heavens and new earth, with the world to be dissolved in non-oxidizing fire before the arrival of this new, non-physical earth. For if New Jerusalem were a city possessing mass, the earth could not spin on its axis or orbit the sun; the earth couldn’t be round in shape but would have to appear as an inverted Frisbee, with New Jerusalem placed in the center of the inverted disc. The laws of physics wouldn’t allow otherwise.

Therefore if baptism in spirit doesn’t occur to Israel until the Second Passover liberation from indwelling sin and death, and doesn’t happen to the third part of humanity (from Zech 13:9) until dominion over the single kingdom of this world is taken from the Adversary and his angels and given to the Son of Man, then what sort of baptism exists prior to the Second Passover? The baptism of John, in water and for the death of the lawless old self? And this will be the subject of next Sabbath’s Reading. This Reading has raised more questions than it has answered, and as such needs to be considered for the week.

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