

The following suggested or possible grouping of Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and limited commentary are, hopefully, obviously thematically related. And the concept behind this High Sabbath's selection is the nature of the Holy Spirit...it is suggested that fellowships have morning and afternoon services on the High Days; thus, readings for two services are grouped together.

Readings for First High Sabbath Of Unleavened Bread 2008 April 21, 2008

Morning Services

The person conducting services 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 services should read or assign to be read scriptural passages, with the first passage read being all of Leviticus chapter 23.

Commentary: Within Christendom Moses and the Law of Moses have fallen on hard times; yet the testimony of Jesus is, "If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" (John 5:46–47). The answer is you won't. And Jesus again makes this point in the Lazarus/Dives parable (Luke 16:31).

When coming to Scripture, a person comes with certain "frames" that limit thought, thereby allowing the person to quickly make sense of incoming data, accepting certain data, rejecting other data. Every person encounters too much stimuli to address each bit [byte] of incoming information. A filter is needed that allows in what is "important" in certain categories and rejects everything else—and these mental frames serve to filter incoming data. Thus, if a person's frame separates the Law of Moses from the Gospel message of Grace, then the person will read the words of Jesus, can hear these words read, but cannot comprehend what the writer of Hebrew records, "Therefore, while the promise of entering his [Christ's] rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us just as to them [Israel — the nation that left Egypt], but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened" (4:1–2).

The declarative sentences say that the Gospel message has come to endtime disciples as it came to Israel in the Wilderness.

The frames that allow Evangelical Christians to make sense of the world will not permit inputting data that has the Gospel of faith being preached to physically circumcised Israel. They just cannot mentally go there. It would take an unusually long period of time or a catastrophic event that threatens their existence to break the frames that assign salvation via the Law to ancient Israel and salvation by Grace to New Testament Christians. The frames that allow Evangelical Christians—even Seventh Day Adventists—to make sense of the Bible and to comprehend the existence of God will

have a dividing line occurring at Calvary: the Law was until Calvary and Grace has been since Calvary. The concept of natural grace covering every person prior to Moses will make no sense to them; yet this is what Paul said when he wrote, “[F]or sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law” (Rom 5:13) ... if sin is not counted as sin, then the person is under grace even though the person has not yet been raised from the dead by the Father (John 5:21) and given life through receipt of the divine breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ]. The person has grace in this world just as a disciple, born of spirit, has Grace in the heavenly realm through the garment of Christ Jesus’ righteousness—the natural man has no indwelling immortal soul or eternal life until such life is given to the person by God (Rom 6:23).

Belief that human beings are born with immortal souls entered Christianity from Greek paganism, but—here is another example of frames limiting perception—there is virtually no argument that can be made to convince the many sons of disobedience that eternal life does not come from a man having his way with a maid. Eternal life does not come from fornication in the backseat of a Chevrolet; it does not come from the first Adam who was driven from the Garden before he ate of the Tree of life; it does not come from any form of lawlessness. It comes solely from the Father raising the person from the dead by giving life through receipt of His breath [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] to a human being either still breathing air or who has expired and then physically resurrected in the great White Throne Judgment. And when it comes and resides in a tent of flesh, the person is under judgment, either in this age (1 Pet 4:17) or in the great White Throne Judgment. There is no spiritual life in a tent of flesh that can enter the kingdom of heaven, or that can be judged in the kingdom until the Father gives this life to a person through receipt of His divine breath. Then and only then will the Son give life to whom He will by causing the mortal flesh to put on immortality.

Thus, the frames that allow an Evangelical Christian to safely cross a busy street and to function day by day in this world also prohibit this person from receiving text revealing that eternal life is a gift from God in Christ Jesus (again, Rom 6:23). Reading Paul’s words through the bias of believing that human beings are born with immortal souls will cause the Evangelical Christian to believe that the immortal soul has been “regenerated” by Christ, a nonsensical belief widely accepted within Christendom. And unfortunately, tragedy on an unimaginable scale will be necessary to rework the frames through which Christianity presently engages Scripture. The Tribulation is unavoidable, but cannot be welcomed by anyone although the prayers of Christians are for Christ to hasten His return so the prayers of saints are for the coming of seven endtime years unlike anything human beings have previously experienced.

Again, the frames through which Evangelical Christendom engages Scripture will greatly hinder if not outright prevent realization that the Gospel of Grace was preached to ancient Israel just as it is now preached to the Church, and just as few physically circumcised Israelites believed this Gospel—because they were not united in faith with the one proclaiming it—as Christians believe it today.

How was the Gospel preached to Israel in the Wilderness? The manna that came down from heaven was the shadow and type of Jesus of Nazareth (John 6:32–33, 35) who came down from heaven as the only Son of *Theos* [θεός] (John 3:16), the Creator of all that has been made (John 1:1–3). Israel drank spiritual drink when they drank the water that gushed forth from the rock (1 Cor 10:4). Crossing the Sea of Reeds was a shadow and type of baptism (vv. 1–2). Hearing the Law uttered by the breath of God

from atop Sinai formed the shadow and type of the laws of God being written on hearts and minds by the breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ]. In the Wilderness, physically circumcised Israel saw with eyes and heard with ears the same Gospel message that endtime Israel, a nation circumcised of hearts, hears in the mind and feels in the conscience. As the Passover lambs sacrificed by Israel were shadows and copies of the Christ Jesus, the Passover Lamb of God, and as the priests of Israel offering gifts according to the law were a shadow and copy of heavenly things (Heb 8:5), with these heavenly things being Christ Jesus entering into the holy place of God by means of His shed blood (Heb 9:11–14), the good news that was proclaimed to ancient Israel was the shadow and copy of the Gospel of Grace. And as ancient Israel failed to enter into God's rest—His presence—because of unbelief (Heb 3:19), the Christian Church also failed to enter into God's presence because of unbelief manifest as disobedience, or lawlessness.

A legitimate argument is that the shadow of a thing is not the thing itself, as the hard shell of a seed grain is not the living kernel within the shell ... this is the argument made by Puritan theologians. But move this argument into the animal kingdom: when the hard shell of a crab splits and is shed so that the crab can grow, the soft shell of the molting crab is visibly similar to its former hard shell. Likewise, when the hard shell of a physically circumcised Israelite gave/gives way to the soft shell of the Israelite circumcised of heart, the spiritually circumcised Israelite will look outwardly like the physically circumcised Israelite *sans* his hardness of heart and mind. The disciple inside is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek—and it is this son of God that compares to the germ of the seed grain, not the tent of flesh which remains male or female, bond or free. The tent of flesh is the outside that is of this world and visible in this world: it is like the outside of a soft shell crab that has outgrown its former home in that it still looks like it formerly did, but with a softness and toughness that has replaced its former hardness.

If a spiritually circumcised Israelite does not look like a physically circumcised Israelite, minus the hardness of heart, then this disciple of Christ does not walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6), nor does this disciple imitate Paul as Paul imitated Jesus (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17). The Seventh Day Adventist or the Mennonite can seek to obey God, can feel good about him or herself, can assure him or herself that he or she is saved, and can be utterly deceived and in actual rebellion against God, for neither look much like a soft shelled Israelite, especially today, the first high Sabbath of Unleavened Bread—in the Apostle John's words, *the great day of the Sabbath* (John 19:31 in Greek). Neither is appearing before God with an offering.

Now, with that to think about, *The Philadelphia Church* and the *Churches of God* traditionally take up an offering on the three seasons when all Israel was to appear before God, and not appear empty, but giving as blessed and as able. This practice, however, shall not be continued. Even when Paul was in need, he did not burden the saints at Corinth (2 Cor 11:9), and the passing of an offering plate places a psychological burden upon the person attending services to give. A box for donations is sufficient burden to satisfy the needs of the hosting fellowship to cover its expenses without causing a burden to any individual who might be too embarrassed to pass along a collection plate without making a contribution.

In moving from physical to spiritual, the disciple who is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, bond nor free is also not the tent of flesh that physically occupies space on a pew or a folding chair on an auditorium floor; hence this disciple owns nothing but the tent of flesh in which he dwells as a son of God. The disciple has nothing that can be brought before God and given except the time the tent of flesh spends in services on the high Sabbaths. Therefore, the only appropriate offering for the inner self-aware, self-conscience new man or creature will be presenting the body that is its tent of flesh before God. Disciples in those fellowships that do not observe the holy days will, in the heavenly realm, appear before God in their prayers on these days. But they appear empty-handed. They appear with nothing, while all who are here today have brought an offering: themselves.

God loves a cheerful giver, and workman are worthy of their hire—but the servants of God work for the Father and the Son, who have undertaken the responsibility to provide for those who work for them. Every disciple knows how God has blessed the person, and every disciple must determine how the tent of flesh will disperse the all-too-often meager income of the person whom the Father has drawn from this world. The handling of one's finances is, thus, strictly a matter between God and the person.

No greater indictment of the Christian Church can be made than the Church, while the promise of entering God's rest still stood (Heb 4:1), did not mentally journey by faith to Judea, a theological landscape that will have disciples walking as Jesus walked and imitating Jesus as Paul imitated Jesus, and begin to live by the word of God, words uttered by Jesus who spoke only the Father's words. Instead, the Church turned its back to Moses who wrote of Jesus, and began to consciously separate itself from all things Jewish. The Church walked away from God because it did not agree with Jesus' anti-family message. Yes, Jesus delivered an anti-family gospel:

Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. (Matt 10:34–37)

The “house—οἰκίαν” that a disciple leaves when following Jesus is not merely a physical structure of wood and stone, but a person's lineage, his or her family and ancestry; for Jesus has gone ahead to prepare a “staying” [as in a legal stay of execution] in His Father's house (John 14:1–3). Disciples are sons of God. Although the tent of flesh in which the new creature that is a son of God resides remains male or female, Jew or Greek, and of a certain genealogical house, the new creature is not of this “house,” but is of God and is of the Father's house. Thus, when Hellenist converts, spiritual novices, in Achaia and Asia received this anti-family message, they rejected it: all in Asia left Paul (2 Tim 1:15), while saints in Achaia were questioning whether Paul was even of God. In Greek culture, family was of utmost importance. The frames by which Greeks perceived the world prevented Hellenist converts from being able to attach any significance to a message about Christ being of more importance than father or mother, son or daughter.

It must be understood that Greeks were superstitious, but not religious as the Jews were. As early as Homer's *Odyssey*, the Greek pantheon was a narrative "device" that had a form of deity but not the substance; for in telling a false account of his adventures, Odysseus attributed to Zeus actions that slandered the god. If Homer as author or Odysseus as protagonist believed that Zeus were a "real god," both would have been careful about what was written or spoken concerning Zeus. Because this care or reverence is entirely lacking from the *Odyssey*, the same lack of care or reverence was taken with what Jesus said and with what Paul taught.

Backing up for a moment: how religious are most Christians in America or in Europe? How many truly believe Scripture? Do not nearly all self-identified Christians have difficulty doing more than naming the four Gospels? How many can name the fellowships to whom Paul wrote epistles? How many know that Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets" (Matt 5:17)? How many know that Jesus said, "If you believed Moses, you would believe me" (John 5:46)? Obviously, not many; nor do many care. And this was the attitude of Hellenist Greeks toward the Pantheon: they offered sacrifice to the Pantheon because it was the thing to do, just as sending Christmas cards is the thing to do in the United States. And when fornication with a temple prostitute was the expectation of belief in the Pantheon, it was fairly easy to continue in this religious tradition without truly believing in Zeus. Lip service was enough. That and a good feast and maybe a visit to the local temple to copulate with a priestess for the sake of field fertility ... Odysseus spends a year with Cerce, enjoying her favors, and seven years with Calypso, the bewitching nymph and lusty goddess, before returning home to a chaste wife—and belief within this paradigm of masculine superiority and sexual unaccountability elevated men to the status where when offered immortality as Calypso offered Odysseus, the man's home and family were of greater worth. The gods and goddesses were, literally, of less worth than a man's family.

So when Greek philosophers steeped in paganism saw in Christ the solution to paganism's perpetual problem of how can one be assured of a favorable position in the afterlife—the problem inherent in Islam today—they absorbed Christ with the same reverence Odysseus extended to Athena. They did not have the frames of the Pharisees and Sadducees, for whom the name of the Creator was too sacred to pronounce. They were quick to embrace Paul's message that circumcision of the heart by spirit had superseded circumcision of the flesh by hands (Rom 2:28–29; Col 2:11), and they were even quicker in rejecting Paul's instruction to follow him as he followed Christ, with him walking as Jesus walked. They were not about to live as Observant Jews, uncircumcised in the flesh but circumcised of heart through keeping the precepts of the law by faith (Rom 2:26). No, it was far too easy to twist Paul's epistles into saying that the law had been abolished, that Paul's doubly accursed gospel was attempting to keep the law, which existed to prove that it couldn't be kept. It was, simply, too easy to twist Paul's epistles into instruments of their own destruction (2 Pet 3:15–17).

The frames by which Greeks engaged Christianity did not allow them to perceive Jesus as teaching an anti-family message, or a message that deemphasized the flesh and biological descent. After all, Plato and other philosophers had already taught them that they had immortal souls; even in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus entered the underworld to talk to the breathless shades. The Apostle Paul struggled against would-be teachers of saints that devoted themselves "to myths and endless genealogies" (1 Tim 1:3–4). And in the

21st-Century, disciples do not well appreciate just how difficult it would have been for a Hellenist convert to teach that Jesus came to pit a man against his father, and a man against his son. The only real way that this difficulty can be appreciated is through comprehending how difficult it would be for a devout Mennonite to teach that human beings do not have immortal souls, and that Sunday is not the Sabbath.

For Hellenist Greeks, the Father and the Son were like Zeus and Athena, only real, not a fiction. But what it meant for the Father and the Son to be “real” was a low barre and did not require great reverence, but rather, the show of reverence.

Appearing before God on Sunday morning to say mass satisfied the need to show reverence to God, especially when a statue of Mary was prominently displayed in the garden and a cross hung on the wall [to the left of the door and on the far wall]. A person did not need to spend all day thinking about God. Getting together with the family—a meal and conversation afterwards and maybe some music—was as important as attending mass.

Where is all of this going? When Peter said, “See, we have left our homes and followed you,” Jesus said to His disciples, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life” (Luke 18:28–30). The *house* that will be left is like the wife, brothers, and parents: it is a person’s lineage, his or her ancestry. The disciple is a son of God, a son in the Father’s house. The disciple’s lineage is the same as Christ Jesus’ and the disciple in the tent of flesh has given up the tent of flesh’s human lineage for that of the Father. So yes, Christianity is an extremely anti-family belief paradigm that causes a person difficulty in this world that emphasizes traditional Greek values of hearth and home, family ancestry and national ethnicity. But the promise of Christ is that the disciple will receive more than has been lost, with this more including relationships made with all who are today appearing before God.

Keeping the Sabbath of God sets a person apart from this world and is a sign that identifies the person as being of the household of God. But the “Sabbath” is not just the seventh day of the week: it is every day listed in Leviticus chapter 23. It is the weekly Sabbath, plus the three seasons a year when Israelites are to appear before the Most High. And the Sabbatarian Christian who will not come before God on these three seasons breaks the Sabbath just as surely as does the Pope.

Today, a disciple’s failure to appear before God is covered by Grace. The disciple is spiritually as the many descendants of Noah were physically after the Flood, and disciples who hear the words of Jesus and believe the one who sent Him (John 5:24) are as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with Paul identifying disciples as Isaac (Gal 4:21–31). But shortly—the Father knows for certain how long—Israel will be liberated from bondage to sin and death as natural Israel was liberated from physical bondage to Pharaoh. Then as death and natural grace reigned until Moses (Rom 5:14) when the Law came, life covered by the mantle of Christ’s righteousness (the Gospel of Grace) will end when the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:26–30). Disciples will be empowered by the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον], and any transgression of the Law will subject the person to the second death, the lake of fire; for any transgression of the Law will be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

The disciple who has practiced walking uprightly before God will be able to do so when sin and death no longer reside in the flesh of the person, and the disciple who has

squandered his time covered by grace will see no need to walk uprightly before God. And as the nation that left Egypt was rejected because of unbelief (Num chap 14; Heb 3:19) even though the Gospel was preached to this nation in a manner as understandable as the Gospel has been preached to the endtime Church, the visible Church will also be rejected because of its unbelief ... the Church simply will not keep the Sabbaths of God. It is as sloppy in its observance of the Sabbaths as Odysseus in recounting the exploits of Zeus.

Those who are today attending services need to take advantage of this opportunity to know other family members of the household of the Father, the house they will receive for having left the house of their physical fathers.

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The person conducting the High Day services should, at this time, adjourn services, with a hymn, a prayer, and a blessing on the food (if appropriate). The person should also announce when afternoon services are to commence.

Afternoon Services

At the appropriate time, the person conducting services should resume services with two or three hymns, and a prayer.

The reader should begin afternoon services by reading Deuteronomy chapters 29 through 32.

Commentary: This Israel, the circumcised and uncircumcised children of the nation that left Egypt, will cross over the Jordan on the 10th of the first month (Josh 4:19) as the selected paschal lamb of God, entering His presence as Moses entered into His presence when Moses saw the back of God—when God turned His eyes from Moses as he promised He would do to blemished children, a crooked and twisted generation (Deut 32:5).

Wait a minute: if this nation of Israel is blemished, it cannot be the paschal lamb of God. And here is where understanding must come: God hides His face from Israel, His firstborn son (Ex 4:22) according to the flesh so that He could see what the nation's end would be when He provoked Israel to anger with a foolish nation (Deut 32:20–21), a people that was not before a people (1 Pet 2:10). But He had to create this foolish nation, and He created it by entering His creation (John 1:1–3) as His only Son (John 3:16) to become the First of the firstfruits, the firstborn son of the Father, whom Israel never knew (with the possible exception of King David). The Passover Lamb of God would come from the children of Israel, but not until *Theos*—θεός enter His creation as His only Son. The Passover Lamb of God could come from no other peoples, but it had to be without blemish, and all of Israel had sinned prior to Jesus of Nazareth.

Although Abraham had his belief counted to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6) so that God could testify to Isaac that Abraham had kept His statutes and commandments (Gen 26:5), no one in Israel was without sin prior to Jesus being born of Mary. Even David, a man after God's heart, failed to live uprightly when too much was seen on a rooftop.

Because Israel under a ministry of death (2 Cor 3:7) — the glory of which came from Moses as a servant seeing the back of the Creator — had no spiritual life [i.e., was not born of spirit], the salvation offered to Israel was the promise of inheriting life ... the promise of the Gospel preached to natural Israel was one of inheritance, of inheriting the kingdom of heaven; whereas the better promise made to Israel under the ministry of the spirit is receipt of life prior to demonstrated obedience. When Christ Jesus became the mediator of the covenant made with the mixed circumcised and uncircumcised children of Israel, better promises were added to this covenant made on the plains of Moab. Better promises are not added to abolished covenants; nor does an abolished covenant get a new mediator. Calvary ended the offense of physical circumcision that separated the uncircumcised from the commonwealth of Israel and the covenant of promise (Eph 2:12); Calvary did not abolish these covenants of promise. And these covenants of promise form the Gospel preached to Israel that did not benefit this nation.

In the redemption of firstborns, redemption is preached; in the passing over of Israelites covered by the blood of the Passover lamb, Christ's sacrificed at Calvary is preached. In the promise of inheriting eternal life upon demonstrated obedience, salvation is preached. In the promise of entering into God's rest is the promise of entering into the presence of God. In the promise to bring Israel back to the Promised Land when Israel in a far land turns to God and begins to love Him with heart and mind, obeying all His commands in Deuteronomy, is the promise of forgiveness from sin. No element of the Gospel message is absent from what Moses, as a faithful servant, delivered to Israel. But again, the glory that rested upon Moses came from seeing the back of God, for Moses had no indwelling spiritual or immortal life. He could not see the face of God in His glory and live.

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The reader should now read Ezekiel chapters 20, followed by Jeremiah chapters 16 & 17.

Commentary: Israel's lawlessness in the Promised Land was far worse than was Abraham's and Isaac's telling of half-truths [that their wives were their sisters], or even the deception of Jacob ... although it is foolishness to compare one human being with another, even the Apostle Paul engaged in a little of such foolishness to make a point—and the point here is that the movement from the patriarchs to the nation of Israel foregrounds increasing lawlessness and rebellion against God. Likewise, the movement from the 1st-Century Church to the 21st-Century Church discloses a similar increase in rebellion against God as is seen by natural Israel. After all, when others cannot see the inner self except through the actions of the flesh, the lawless person can hide his or her lawlessness through a mask of respectability, except in one area: Sabbath observance. The lawless person will inevitably attempt to enter God's rest on the following day, Sunday, rather than on the Sabbath.

Since Calvary, the separation of humanity through circumcision doesn't divide according to the flesh, but by receipt of the Holy Spirit [*Pneuma 'Agion*—πνεῦμα ἅγιον] and the demonstration of faith that cleanses hearts: circumcision is now of the heart and the mind. The spiritually circumcised Israelite has been born of water [of the womb] and of Spirit (John 3:5). Although it has been long taught that baptism is the ritual of inclusion for Christians that equates to physical circumcision for the biological sons of the patriarch Abraham, this is simply not true. Baptism is unto the death of the old self, the old nature that equates to Terah and to the nation that left Egypt. Spiritual

circumcision is what makes a “Christian” a disciple of Christ Jesus. Baptism, though, is the only visible outer ritual—because it is of the flesh and to the death of the old nature that rule the flesh, it is visible—by which a born of Spirit disciple is made a member of the household of God, upon which judgment has come. Until baptized, a born anew disciple cannot be spiritually older than a Hebrew infant of less than eight days of age is physical old. Yes, the Hebrew infant is of Israel, but is not yet included among the tally of Israelite males until circumcised. Likewise, until spiritually circumcised, a Christian is not included among the count of Israel. And since physical circumcision causes an Israelite to appear naked before the Lord, covered by only his own obedience, spiritual circumcision brings judgment upon the disciple, who must put on the garment of Grace until revealed or again made naked (Luke 17:30) at the end of the age.

Baptism is always unto repentance, the fruit of which is seen through the death of the old self. Baptism represents death, not life.

The recovery of Israel at the end of the age isn’t recovery of a physical nation, but of the spiritual nation, a chosen people, a royal priesthood that was not a nation prior to birth from above into tents of flesh that are of every color, with indoor and outdoor plumbing, and of various ancestries. It is with this nation that God reasons when He makes the nation pass under the rod.

Pause for a moment and consider: how many Christians keep the commandments by faith? None that worship on Sunday, correct? Must God reason with these alleged disciples of Jesus? Yes, He must. And do you want to be one of those who will argue with Him? What are your chances of winning?

The Feast of Unleavened Bread becomes the seven endtime years of tribulation when all of spiritual Israel is to live without sin, or be permanently cut off from the holy nation ... that’s the argument God will make: live without sin, or be cut off from Israel. It is a “take it or leave it” argument. Truly, it really is.

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The reader should now read 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, verses 1 through 12.

Commentary: As the Israelite nation that left Egypt rebelled against the Lord in the wilderness of Paran, the Church will rebel against God 220 days into the seven endtime years of tribulation: on a particular day about Christmas, spiritually circumcised Israel will demonstrate its unbelief by refusing to enter God’s rest when commanded. It will, instead, attempt to enter God’s rest on the following day, as is its present custom, and it will attempt to keep Christmas (*That’s all we can give the children this year; we can’t take that from them, too*—can’t you even now hear what will be said). But with the revealing of the Son of Man, the garment of Christ Jesus’ righteousness will have been removed, and spiritually circumcised Israel will then be as the physically circumcised nation has been since the patriarch Abraham cut away the foreskins of all the males of his household ... Isaac, the firstborn son of promise, wasn’t yet conceived when Ishmael was circumcised. Likewise, the spiritual descendants of the greater Church will not have been born anew, or born a second time—their birth awaits the divine Breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] being poured out upon all flesh (Joel 2:28)—when the Church is revealed, or made spiritually naked before God, its only covering then being its obedience to the laws of God.

A set of correspondences exist:

- Physically circumcised Israel in Egypt forms the shadow and copy of today’s Christian Church.

- Physical bondage to Pharaoh corresponds to bondage to sin and death; to disobedience.
- Israel's Passover lamb slain in Egypt corresponds to Jesus' death at Calvary.
- Israel's liberation corresponds to the Church's empowerment by the Holy Spirit.

The Church formally entered Babylonian captivity when the pagan Roman Emperor Constantine determined what sound doctrine would be at the Council of Nicea (ca 325 CE). Thus,

- Israel's exodus corresponds to the Church leaving spiritual Babylon.

Whereas receipt of the Holy Spirit liberates the mind from disobedience (Rom 8:2), the law of sin and death continues to dwell in the members of disciples, what the Apostle Paul could not understand (Rom 7:25). So within every disciple today, the mind wars with the flesh—and the flesh wins too many battles. But as Israel in Egypt was liberated from bondage to Pharaoh, the representation of sin, the Church will also be liberated from bondage to sin and death through empowerment by the Holy Spirit before the long spiritual night of watching that began at Calvary ends. But the lives of men will again be given as ransom for the Church's liberation as the lives of Egyptians were given for the ransom of natural Israel (Isa 43:3-4).

Too many false prophets would have the plagues of Egypt being repeated before lives are again given to ransom now spiritually-circumcised Israel. These false teachers do not understand where disciples stand in history: Christ Jesus as the Passover Lamb of God has been slain—was slain two millennia ago. And one long night of watching began at Calvary as what was physical becomes spiritual.

The midnight hour has not yet arrived, for lives have not again been given for the liberation of the Church from sin and death. But that midnight hour is not now far in the future. Rather, it is close. Humanity has entered the time of the end, a period that is a little longer than the seven endtime years of tribulation. Roughly, the time of the end corresponds to the practice of the remnant of Israel beginning to keep the days of Unleavened Bread when the paschal lamb entered Jerusalem on the 10th of the first month (this remnant started the seven day festival five days early, making for a twelve plus day "Sabbath" season).

Because of the importance placed upon Israel's exodus from Egypt, a story that will no longer be remembered when the spiritually circumcised nation is recovered from sin and death, the story should be familiar to every disciple.

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The reader should now read Exodus chapters 7 through chapter 13.

Commentary: These plagues have already spiritually occurred to Israel, and the Passover Lamb of God has been slaughtered. But these plagues will be repeated in type during the Tribulation as God makes a separation between rebelling disciples and the third part of humanity that will be born of Spirit when the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ (Rev 11:15). This third part (Zech 13:9) will form the great endtime harvest, for today's Christian Church, with few exceptions, will rebel against God as Israel rebelled in the wilderness of Paran. Today's greater Church refuses to eat the Passover sacraments on the night Jesus was betrayed. The sacraments of bread and wine are the fruit of the earth on every other night but the 14th of the first month; they are Cain's offering to the Lord.

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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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