

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 coming of the Messiah...it is suggested that fellowships have morning and afternoon services on the High Days; thus, readings for two services are grouped together.

## **Readings for Last High Sabbath Of Unleavened Bread 2007 April 9, 2007**

### **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 first passage read should be Leviticus chapter 23, verses 1 and 2, then verses 4 through 8, followed by Deuteronomy chapter 16, verses 1 through 8, and 16 and 17, then Exodus chapter 23, verses 14 through 17.*

**Commentary:** Both the circumcised nation that left Egypt, and that nation's mixed circumcised and uncircumcised children who received the second covenant—a covenant made in addition to the Sinai or Horeb covenant (Deut 29:1)—were told to appear before the Lord three times a year. These three seasons were Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. But there are not three harvests of God: there are only two, with one represented by the barley harvest and with the other represented by the wheat harvest.

It has been convenient to think in terms of a harvest at each of the three seasons when Israel was to appear before the Lord, with Christ Jesus representing the harvest at Passover or Unleavened Bread, when He was resurrected and accepted by the Father; then with the firstfruits (disciples in this present era) representing a second resurrection that will occur at a prescribed time later (the counting of the seven weeks), and with the great White Throne Judgment representing the resurrection that will occur on the Last Great Day. In fact, the churches of God "married" the idea of three harvests to such an extent that they mocked those theologians and denominations that had the Second Advent wrapping up the plan of God. But alas, as the spiritual journey from Babylon to Judea, then on to Jerusalem required jettisoning much error that had passed for *truth* for centuries, the spiritual journey from the walls of Jerusalem to the temple mount where the Apostle Paul laid the foundation for the spiritual house of God also requires jettisoning error that is close to the truth, but not close enough.

The days of Unleavened Bread represent Israel living without sin, and these days spiritually started when Jesus of Nazareth, the selected and chosen Lamb of God, a Lamb appropriate to the size of the household of God, was sacrificed on the Preparation Day at even [as 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Pharisees determined when Passover lambs were to be sacrificed] as the spiritual reality of the many Passover lambs sacrificed between Moses

and Calvary. But one problem had to be resolved: *Israel* was not yet a spiritually circumcised nation. The only *Israel* that existed was the physically circumcised nation that through its answer to Pilate [“His blood be on us and on our children” – Matt 27:25] took upon itself the responsibility for ending the marriage covenant made at Sinai. Therefore, with Christ Jesus’ death physically circumcised Israel ceased being the holy nation of God, with status since Sinai (Ex 19:5-6), and the physical body of Jesus alone represented all of *Israel* that was holy to God for the three days and three nights that His body lay dead in the heart of the earth. And because the body of Jesus was holy to God, the gates of Hades could not prevail against His body: the Father raised Jesus from the dead after three days. Thus, Jesus was returned to life in the dark portion of the first day of the week, and was gone from the grave before sunrise (John 20:1). The gates of Hades had not prevailed over holy *Israel*, now a spiritual nation that consisted of only the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.

But on the same day as when He was resurrected from death and ascended to His Father, where He was accepted as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering, the first handful of barley to be harvested [no barley could be harvested or eaten before the waved sheaf was offered by the high priest], Jesus returned to His disciples and breathed on ten of them (Thomas was not there, and Judas Iscariot had hung himself), saying “Receive the Holy Spirit [Πνευμα Ἅγιον – *Pneuma Ἅγιον* or Breath Holy]” (John 20:22). The Church begins on the same day that Jesus was resurrected from death, ascended to the Father, and returned to impart the Holy Spirit to His disciples by direct transfer (breathing on them). One day, the fourth day of Unleavened Bread, the first day of a new physical week.

The Passover scenario has been given before, but there remain too many who do not believe God so it will be given again: The Passover is eaten in the dark portion of the Preparation Day is the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib, and the Passover lamb is slain at even, or between the evenings on the 14<sup>th</sup> going into the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Jesus was taken and crucified on the Preparation Day (John 19:31, 42), with His death occurring at the ninth hour (3:00 pm), halfway between the first evening (noon) and the second evening (6:00 pm) as the Pharisees reckoned when Passover lambs were to be slain. Jesus had entered Jerusalem five days before the Passover (cf. John 12:1; 12:12)—He was slain on the 14<sup>th</sup>, one day earlier; so Jesus entered Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Abib, the day when Passover lambs were to be selected and penned. Therefore, it can properly be said that Jesus was penned in Jerusalem (Bethany was out of the city in that it was outside the walls, but it was part of the city), or in the Jerusalem area from the 10<sup>th</sup> day through the 14<sup>th</sup> when He was sacrificed as the paschal lamb of God.

Only one sign would be given to an evil and adulterous generation: the sign of Jonah, which was three days and three nights (Matt 12:40). There is no ambiguity in the Hebrew expression for a day and a night—three days and three nights equal three calendar days, or seventy-two hours.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took Jesus’ body and laid it in the Garden Tomb as the sun was setting on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib. Jesus now lay in the heart of the earth throughout the high Sabbath, the 15<sup>th</sup>, then throughout the 16<sup>th</sup>, then throughout the 17<sup>th</sup>, the weekly Sabbath. He was then resurrected from death at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup>, the first day of the week. And a weekly calendar timeline can now be established: the 17<sup>th</sup> was the weekly Sabbath, so the preceding weekly Sabbath was the 10<sup>th</sup>. Jesus entered Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup>, the weekly Sabbath, as both future high priest [riding the colt of a

donkey as opposed to a donkey] and as Passover Lamb. He teaches in the temple and confronts the religious leaders on primarily the 12<sup>th</sup>, Monday, then instructs His disciples on Tuesday, the 13<sup>th</sup>, to prepare where He will eat the Passover with His disciples on the Preparation Day, not on the 15<sup>th</sup>, when He will be dead. And He is taken and crucified on Wednesday, the 14<sup>th</sup>, the middle of the calendar week, and the middle of seven years of ministry that stems from the seventy-weeks prophecy given to Daniel. He is then resurrected three days later, and ascends to His Father on the fourth day of Unleavened Bread, the eighth day since entering Jerusalem.

The realization that Jesus was crucified on the mid-day of the physical calendar week, controlled by the weekly Sabbath, and was resurrected and ascended to the Father on the mid-day of Unleavened Bread, a spiritual week controlled by the high Sabbaths or annual Sabbaths should suggest to disciples Israel's movement from being a physically circumcised nation to being a spiritually circumcised nation. This realization can wrongly be taken to justify attempting to enter God's rest on Sunday, the first day of the calendar week, rather than on the Sabbath. And it will here be stated with clarity: Jesus' resurrection on the mid-day of Unleavened Bread is not and never will be justification for observing Sunday rather than the Sabbath. To substitute Sunday for the Sabbath is to transgress the commandments of God, and the disciple who worships on Sunday while knowing that he or she should worship on the Sabbath is a hypocrite who will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Likewise, the Sabbatarian who knows to keep the high Sabbaths, but who does not because he or she has likened the high Sabbaths to a picture of Jesus is a hypocrite whose righteousness does not exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt 5:20).

Again, during the seven days of Unleavened Bread, leavening represents sin. Leavening [yeast] is physical; sin [transgression of the commandments] is spiritual. Thus, the typology of the visible revealing the invisible, and the physical preceding the spiritual is at play in leavening representing sin, just as it is in play with physical male lambs of the first year, selected as the Passover sacrifice for physically circumcised Israel, representing Christ Jesus as the Passover Lamb of God, the sacrifice that covers sin for spiritually circumcised Israel. And during all seven days of Unleavened Bread, Israel is to live without leavening/sin.

Let the realization settle for a movement that Christ's death at Calvary represents the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb of God, and that Israel now eats of this holy Lamb when it takes the sacraments of bread and wine on the night that Jesus was betrayed, that Israel has entered into the spiritual week of Unleavened Bread when it is to live without sin or be cut off from God. The "cup" represents the covenant by which Jesus bears the sins of disciples; therefore, the disciple who does not drink from the "cup" on the night that Jesus was betrayed is as an Egyptian was that last night natural Israel was in Egypt.

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 offering is foremost the son of God that is the inner self-aware, self-conscience new man or creature who is spirit through having been born of Spirit presenting the body of the old man, or old self before God. Yes, every son of God (who is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, free or bond) is to appear before God where He has placed His name—where two or three are gathered together in His name, He places His name there—and is to present the fleshly tent in which the son of God dwells to the Lord to do with as the Lord so chooses. The disciple is both servant

and heir to God: the air-breathing tent of flesh serves the Father, and the new creature dwelling in this tent of flesh is the heir, adopted as a son through redemption.

Disciples in those fellowships that do not observe the holy days will, in the heavenly realm, appear before God empty-handed in their prayers on these days, for the heir dwelling in the fleshy tent did not present the tent to God. These disciples appear with nothing, while all who are here today have brought an offering: themselves.

Thus, at this time those who are able through their tents of flesh possessing the means are asked to give of their physical blessings, not reluctantly, but cheerfully. The person who gives of necessity might as well keep the offering--no treasure will be laid up in heaven for a reluctant offering, which includes presenting oneself before God.

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*The person conducting services should, at this time, pass a plate or basket as would be appropriate for the size of the gathering. In larger gatherings, the person conducting the services would appoint others to take up the collection.*

*During the taking up of the offering, special music can be performed. Then following the offering should be a pray of thanks, followed by a hymn.*

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To resume and to jump forward quickly: during the seven endtime years of tribulation, all of Israel will live without sin ... again, endtime Israel is not the natural, physically circumcised descendants of the patriarch Jacob, but the holy (1 Pet 2:9) spiritually circumcised nation that was not a people until born of Spirit in diverse tents of flesh.

Spiritual circumcision follows cleansing hearts by faith for those who have been born of Spirit as physical circumcision followed human birth on the eighth day. Therefore, certain direct correspondences result:

- Birth by the water of the womb is the revealing shadow and copy of birth by Spirit through receipt of the Holy Spirit [Πνευμα Ἅγιον].
- Physical circumcision on the eighth day is the revealing shadow and copy of spiritual circumcision when hearts have been cleansed by a journey of faith equivalent in length to Abraham's journey from Ur of the Chaldeans [spiritual Babylon] to the Promised Land of Judea.
- Circumcision was the inclusionary rite for all natural Israelites; spiritual circumcision is the inclusionary rite for all spiritual Israelites. A person is not part of God's holy nation until spiritually circumcised.
- Circumcision on the eighth day, now, corresponds to that journey of faith from Babylon, representing the single kingdom of this world, to heavenly Jerusalem; thus, the eighth day represents separation from this world as occurred when Jesus was resurrected from death and ascended to the Father.
- All of humankind was consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32) or sin, which is the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4). Separation from this world entails obedience to God, or living by the commandments. Thus, the journey of faith that cleanses hearts will be from disobedience to obedience.

Part of the lie the Adversary used to bruise the heel of the seed of the last Eve—this seed being the Body of Christ—is that it would not die as Jesus' physical body died, that it was immortal as represented by the lie of human beings having immortal souls (see Gen 3:4).

Same lie! The person who believes that he or she received everlasting life as the result of fornication in the backseat of a Chevrolet will also believe that the Church will not die, that the many divisions and thousands of schisms of the one Body has not resulted in the death of the Body but in many ways to come to God as if each way were a spoke of the wheel of life. This person will believe anything, for he or she has no foundation, no knowledge, no faith, and little sense. This person might have 20/20 eyesight, but he or she is spiritually blind.

Because of their placement in the front of faces, human eyes see in three dimensions even if images are reflected to them from two dimensional planes. One eye sees an image a little differently than the other eye, which is why those who have lost sight in an eye lose depth perception. Motion picture and television images are flat and are without depth although the illusion of depth is created through shadowing. This illusion gives "life" to that which is utterly lifeless.

God also uses shadowing to produce the illusion of true "life" in the spiritually lifeless flesh of human beings: the love a father has for his son forms a shadow and copy of the love God the Father has for those human beings who have been born of Spirit. The love a man has for a woman forms a shadow and type of the love Christ Jesus has for His disciples; plus the love a mother has for her child forms a shadow of this same love. It actually takes the shadows of the love a man has for a woman, the love a mother has for her child, and the love a father has for his son combined together and superimposed one over the other to create the visible depth necessary to "see" the love God has for firstfruits.

Because of the darkness of shadows and shadowing, it is unusual to see shadows superimposed as a stereoscopic projector superimposes two images, slightly misaligned, to produce three-dimensional form from two-dimensional imagery. But God has done this: God has run several scenarios concurrently—all of these scenarios forming shadows of endtime events—to produce a "heavenly" image from three-dimensional human beings operating in that fourth dimension of space-time. However, as special viewing glasses are necessary to see or appreciate the "depth" produced by stereoscopic projection, a person must be born of Spirit to see the "heavenly" images produced by the layering of shadows, slightly misaligned.

Stay with this concept for a moment longer: natural Israel [i.e., physically circumcised Israel] forms the shadow of spiritually circumcised Israel in the same way that the two stone tablets Moses lugged down from the mount form the shadow of the law of God written on two tablets of flesh, but natural Israel existed prior to the Passover sacrifice of lambs whereas spiritually circumcised Israel did not exist except in the form of Jesus prior to the sacrifice of the spiritual Passover Lamb. And the two stone tablets God gave to Moses were broken by Moses, who then had to hew out two additional stone tablets upon which God would again write His commandments. Now add to these shadows the realization that the first Adam forms a shadow and copy of the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. But Jesus was not a life-giving spirit during His earthly ministry. He became a life-giving spirit after He ascended to the Father. And what is seen is concurrent imagery that produces layers of shadowing, much of which is slightly

misaligned, but all co-existing; thus, some scholars have felt a hesitancy to pursue typological exegesis beyond a superficial level, whereas the disciple with “special viewing glasses” sees these stereoscopic projections producing a single image that can be examined from all sides as if the disciple were studying a piece of fine art sculpture.

The multiple layers of shadowing form the stereoscopic representation of a heavenly image. Depth is produced first through shadowing, then through the layering of shadows. Therefore, let it be said that what cannot be seen with human eyes because flesh and blood cannot enter the heavenly realm can be seen through stereoscopic shadowing when differing scenarios run concurrently.

The above is most easily seen prophetically, where stereoscopic layering has the first half of the seven endtime years of tribulation forming the time-linked mirror image of the second half. The many false prophets that today bilk their livings from gullible humanity will identify the ransom paid (Isa 43:4) by uncovered firstborns for the second Passover liberation of Israel as the sixth Trumpet plague; for no second Passover liberation of Israel is specifically mentioned in Scripture although what is mentioned is that “the days are coming, declares the Lord, when they shall no longer say, “As the Lord lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,” but “As the lord lives who brought up and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.” Then they shall dwell in their own land” (Jer 23:7-8 also 16:14-15). Note carefully. The sixth Trumpet plague is preceded by its shadow. The third of humankind that will be slain in the sixth Trumpet plague (Rev 9:18) is but a shadow of the third of humankind (all firstborns) that is slain at the beginning of the seven endtime years of tribulation when what happened in Egypt forms the shadow of what happens at the beginning of the Tribulation.

Consider the numbers: a third of humankind is slain at the second Passover, the spiritual reality of what occurred when physically circumcised Israel was freed from physical bondage to Pharaoh. Of the remaining two thirds, a fourth part is given to Death, the fourth horseman of the Apocalypse (Rev 6:8)—a fourth of two-thirds is one-sixth ( $\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{2}{3} = \frac{2}{12}$  or  $\frac{1}{6}$ ). Add one-sixth to one-third and only half of humankind remains alive immediately before the sixth Trumpet plague occurs ( $\frac{1}{6} + \frac{2}{6} = \frac{3}{6}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$ ). Now when a third part is slain by the four angels bound at the Euphrates, only a third part of humankind remains alive ( $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{3} = \frac{1}{6}$  subtracted from  $\frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{3}$  of original number). This agrees with what the prophet Zechariah writes: “In the whole land, declares the Lord, two thirds [parts] shall be cut off and perish, and one third shall be left alive. And I [God] will put this third into the fire, and refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. They shall call upon my name, and I will answer them. I will say, “They are my people”; and they will say, “The Lord is my God”” (13:8-9).

The third part of humankind left alive physically and made alive spiritually when Satan is cast from heaven and the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh constitutes the endtime harvest of firstfruits. Those who are today Christians, with the exception of the remnant (Rev 12:17), will either physically or spiritually die by when the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and His Christ halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation. Yes, the numbers will have half of humankind killed by non-explainable causes with another sixth of humankind killed by understandable means (faithful disciples will be numbered in this sixth part). The loss of lives when the second Passover occurs will look like an act of God, like the wrath of God, not like the

bird flu or natural plagues or any other comprehensible means of death. And the death of half of humanity will precede the sixth Trumpet Plague, which occurs thirty or so days before the end of the first half of the seven endtime years. So the ransom in lives paid for the second Passover liberation of Israel as a shadow of the sixth Trumpet Plague is slightly off time-wise, but aligns with the hourly passage of events in the Exodus account of the night Israel leaves Egypt. Together, the two Passover events will form the revealing image of what happens between the sixth Trumpet Plague and when Satan is cast from heaven.

The 144,000 who are of natural Israel and the remnant of spiritual Israel that keeps the commandments and has the spirit of prophecy (Rev 12:17 with Rev 19:10) are all of Israel that crosses alive from the first half of the Tribulation into the second half. These two divisions of Israel form the reality of Joshua and Caleb. And any person who is today born of Spirit and who keeps the commandments and who has or finds one who has the spirit of prophecy can be part of the remnant. God will not allow the many false teachers and false prophets within Christendom, and especially within Sabbatarian Christianity, to teach the third part of humankind that will be born of Spirit when the single kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Father and His Christ (cf. Rev 11:15-18; Dan 7:9-14). Those who teach falsely but love God and keep His commandments will die in faith and will be part of the resurrection of firstfruits to glory. They will not, however, be allowed to teach error to that third part of humankind.

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*The person conducting 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.*

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*The person reading should read Revelation chapter 7; followed by Revelation chapter 14, verses 1 through 5.*

**Commentary:** Today, most disciples who fellowship with a denomination that began since 1800 CE believe that genuine disciples will go to some form of a place of safety when the seven endtime years of tribulation begin. They believe that God will not lay the trials and tribulations of the seven endtime years on them, that they are “too righteous” to suffer along with the remainder of humankind, that since God loves them God will take them away from the outpouring of His wrath on a sinful world.

First, the seven endtime years of tribulation do not represent the outpouring of God’s wrath on this world, but rather, the changing of administrations from Babylon to the Son of Man. And to change administrations, especially when change is not welcomed, requires that the former administration be toppled or overturned. Since Jesus’ kingdom

is not of this world or from this world (John 18:36), the toppling of kingdoms also does not occur in this world, but in the heavenly realm, where war presently rages between the king of Persia and the king of Greece, which the king of Greece will win in a manner foreshadowed by Alexander's victory over Darius in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BCE.

In the second half of the seven endtime years—after the single kingdom of this world has been given to the Son of Man—God will pour out His wrath on those lawless individuals who will not be ruled by Christ Jesus. This is the outpouring of His wrath of which the prophets of old spoke. But God is not an ogre who pours out His wrath on those whom He has consigned to disobedience. He will not pour out His wrath on humankind until after He has liberated all of humankind from bondage to sin and death. Then, and only then, will those individuals who take sin back inside themselves experience His fury.

Disciples are not now in some form of an insulating cocoon. Rather, they experience what the rest of the world experiences; they are tempted in the same ways as the remainder of humankind is tempted; yet they are without sin being imputed to them because Christ Jesus' mantle of righteousness, called Grace in theological shorthand, covers their transgressions as long as sin and death continues to dwell in their flesh. And here is the kicker: when disciples are liberated from indwelling sin and death through being empowered by or filled with the Holy Spirit, Grace ends. The Son of Man will be fully revealed, Head and Body. There will no longer be a need for Grace, for there will no longer be any reason for a disciple to sin. All future sin by disciples will be the willful taking of lawlessness back inside themselves.

When liberated from indwelling sin and death, a disciple cannot say that he or she is too weak to resist sinning, for the disciple has been "filled" with the Holy Spirit as a clay vessel is filled with water. There will be no room inside the disciple for sin. Thus, the disciple who sins after liberation will commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and this blasphemy will not be forgiven.

As physically circumcised Israel was liberated from physical servitude to Pharaoh in Egypt at the physical first Passover, spiritually circumcised Israel will be liberated from spiritual servitude to the prince of this world in spiritual Babylon at the spiritual second Passover. The first Passover liberation of Israel forms the shadow and copy of the second Passover liberation of Israel. But the empowerment of disciples on that day of Pentecost following Calvary (Acts chap 2) also forms the shadow and copy of the empowerment and liberation of spiritually circumcised Israelites at the spiritual second Passover. Two shadows overlay one another, with these shadows slightly misaligned because Pentecost is the Feast of Weeks, not Passover. Pentecost occurs seven weeks after the Wave Sheaf Offering, with these seven weeks representing the course of the Christian Church between Calvary and the Second Advent. The seven days of Unleavened Bread also represent the course of the Christian Church between Calvary and the Second Advent. Thus, the seven days during which Israel is to live without sin (leavening) is represented by the seven weeks of the barley harvest between when the first handful is waved and when the last of the harvest of firstfruits is gathered to God.

The shadows, when overlaid as in a stereoscopic projection, gives a mental "seeing" or understanding of the plan of God that was absent from what has been previously taught by Sabbatarian Christian fellowships. But without being truly born of Spirit, a person cannot—this is not possible to overemphasize—visualize how prophecy will



unfold. The person lacks the spirit of prophecy, and will not be a part of the remnant although this person might well be resurrected to glory upon Christ Jesus' return.

The second covenant as mediated by Moses promises spiritual circumcision upon demonstrated obedience and faith (Deut 30:1-2, 6). If a natural Israelite who is not today born of Spirit turns to God with all of his or her heart and mind and begins to keep the commandments by faith, the promise of the second covenant is that God will give this Israelite a circumcised heart. The Apostle Paul, expounding on this righteousness that comes by faith (Rom 10:6-8; cf. Deut 30:11-14), says that this Israelite need only to profess that Jesus is Lord and believe in his or her heart that the Father raised Jesus from the dead to be saved (Rom 10:9-13). Thus, the "Christian" disciple who keeps the precepts of the law by faith and has his or her uncircumcision counted as circumcision (Rom 2:26-29) and the natural Israelite who keeps the commandments and by faith professes that Jesus is Lord stand on the same theological turf. So once the seven endtime years of tribulation begins, the "Christian" who repents of his or her lawlessness and by faith begins to keep the commandments, and the Observant Jew who by faith professes that Jesus is Lord—neither of whom are today born of Spirit—will receive the Holy Spirit and birth by Spirit, and will have cleansed their hearts by faith, and will be born anew as spiritual virgins, having not previously had any spiritual life in the heavenly realm. Both will be born empowered by the Holy Spirit and liberated from indwelling sin and death, and both will be saved if they endure to the end.

Disciples today who have been truly born of Spirit—there are not many—are not spiritual virgins, for they have sinned and they have those sins covered by the mantle of Christ Jesus' righteousness. No disciple today who is born of Spirit can ever be a spiritual virgin. So the 144,000 consists entirely of those natural Israelites who are born of Spirit after the seven endtime years begin, and after spiritually circumcised Israel is liberated from indwelling sin and death.

Jesus said that of those born of Spirit as virgins [i.e., born of Spirit during the seven endtime years], half will be denied (Matt 25:1-13) access to the wedding supper. So simply being born of Spirit and avoiding sin is not enough. Enduring to the end requires spiritual growth. Enduring is more than simply hanging on to what God gives the person. And as seen by the 144,000 following the Lamb wherever He goes, enduring is following Christ, not holing up in a rock and waiting out the years.

Throughout the seven endtime years, disciples are to live without sin—but these seven endtime years are symbolic as well as literal. Yes, the Tribulation will be seven years long, with the first three and a half years represented by the time, times, and a half a time being the period when the saints are delivered into the hand of the lawless one as prophesied by Daniel (7:25), and with the second three and a half years represented by the time, times, and a half a time that the woman is nourished in the wilderness (Rev 12:14) as natural Israel was nourished in the wilderness of Sin. And this nourishing in the wilderness, along with a few other passages, has fueled the beliefs that the Church will escape to a place of safety or final training or nourishment. For those who believe Ellen G. White, this place of nourishment is heaven. For those who believe Herbert Armstrong, this place of nourishment is Petra. For those who are dispensationalists, this place of nourishment will be a bodily rapture to heaven. And in every case, the self-righteousness believe that nothing bad will happen to them.

The glorified Christ Jesus will lead the 144,000 as the remnant that has the spirit of prophecy will lead the third part of humankind throughout the last three and a half

years of the Tribulation. The taxonomical relationship between the glorified Christ and the liberated and empowered 144,000 natural Israelites suggests that the remnant with the spirit of prophecy will have similar power and use of the Holy Spirit as the two witnesses had throughout the first half of the Tribulation.

The above is enough to consider for the remainder of this high day ... by keeping this high day, the disciple might well be a part of the remnant, but not if the disciple mis-teaches the principles of God. Jesus told His disciples in His Olivet discourse to make sure that they lead no one astray (read Matt 24:4 in its original language), that many would come and lead many astray. This has certainly been the history of Christianity.

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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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