

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 selection is the resurrection of Christ Jesus.

Readings for the Wave Sheaf Offering 2009

April 12, 2009

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 reading for the 2007 Wave Sheaf Offering began as follows:

“The first passage read should be Leviticus chapter 23, verses 1 and 2, then verses 9 through 14.

Commentary: In the course of the calendar advancement, greater Christendom will celebrate the resurrection of Christ Jesus on the day when His resurrection should be observed as the Wave Sheaf Offering, an appointed feast of the Lord that is to be kept by all generations of Israel as is the weekly Sabbath to be kept. And as with the Sabbath commandment, which moved from being a law written on stone tablets that governed the actions of the hand and the body to being a law written on the fleshy tablets of the heart and the mind to govern the thoughts of the mind and the desires of the heart, the Wave Sheaf Offering moved from being the waving of the first ripe sheaf of Judean barley to being the celebration of Christ Jesus' acceptance by the Father.

“When the old written code inscribed in stone tablets was abolished—this code physically divided humanity into two divisions, the Circumcised and the Uncircumcised (Eph 2:11-22)—and a new covenant was made with Israel, a covenant written on hearts and placed in minds (*cf.* Jer 31:33; Heb 8:10), the nation of Israel went from being the physically circumcised nation to being a spiritually circumcised nation, this spiritual circumcision coming after hearts are cleansed by faith.”

The New Covenant has not yet been implemented ... it's easy to say and mostly accurate to say that disciples are under the New Covenant, but of course we know that they are not: the contract conditions of the New Covenant will have the Torah (Jer 31:33) written on the heart and placed within every Israelite, thereby making it unnecessary to teach neighbor and brother to *Know the Lord*, for everyone will *Know the Lord* through having the Torah placed within the person. And what, today, is the purpose of Christian ministry today if not to teach neighbor and brother to *Know the Lord*? Therefore, with linguistic sloppiness typical of Christianity, disciples repeat the mantra that they are under the New Covenant, or under the Second Covenant, not knowing what either is.

Christians are as deaf and as blind as ancient Israelites were: speaking of the crowds that followed Him, Jesus said,

Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says:

“You will indeed hear but never understand,
and you will indeed see but never perceive.

For this people's heart has grown dull,
and with their ears they can barely hear,
and their eyes they have closed,
lest they should see with their eyes
and hear with their ears
and understand with their heart
and turn, and I would heal them.’

But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.
(Matt 13:10–17)

What is meant by the line, *from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away*? The context is knowing the secrets of the kingdom, and that His disciples would be given knowledge of these secrets but the crowds who followed Him would not be given understanding of these mysteries. The most logical explanation is that what little knowledge the crowds had would be taken, leaving the crowds without any understanding. But if this passage is coupled to the parable of the talents, it is the eternal life inherent with receiving the Holy Spirit that is taken away, making this taking away equivalent to being cast into the lake of fire—but for what reason other than simply not having understanding of the mysteries of God?

Christendom today is composed primarily of the crowds that follow Jesus, crowds that are without understanding of what He says and without realization that they do not understand. With very few exceptions, Christians hear without understanding, see without perception, and have hearts dulled by constant lawlessness. The Apostle John would label these Christians as the seed of the devil (1 John 3:4–10), and so they are; for they do not differ substantially from Pharisees about whom Jesus said their father was the devil (John 8:44), for the Pharisees had the law but did not keep it (John 7:19). Christians today have the law but do not keep it, and even claim that it doesn't apply to them.

Pharisees knew the Law or Torah, the five books of Moses, and knew that the Law requires Israel to love the sojourner that was among the nation (Deut 10:19), but the Pharisees had very little love for Gentiles. They sought righteousness through minute examination of the letters of Law, but they read without understanding for their hearts were as hard as the stone tablets Moses twice lugged down from Sinai. They never understood that they assign meaning to the words of Moses, that it is from their hearts

that they assign these meanings, that they will read the words of Moses through whatever is in their hearts. Thus, the lawyer who asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life (Luke 10:25) could correctly recite what the Law said but could not assign meaning to those words that would have Samaritans being his neighbors; hence, the lawyer asked, *Who is my neighbor?*

Christians know the Law, and use the Law as the basis for many children's stories. They know what the Law requires, and they know that the Torah is not yet written on the hearts of brothers and neighbors; so Christians should know that they are not yet under the New Covenant. The writer of Hebrews tells them that the first covenant, made on the night when Israel left Egypt, though becoming obsolete has not yet vanished away (8:13). But what little knowledge they have of the Father and the Son has been, or is being taken from them. Hence, Latin Christians everywhere rose early this morning to greet the rising sun as if their worship of the sun was somehow pleasing to God (Greek Christians will rise early next Sunday). With their ears, English speaking Christians hear no difference between Son and sun; so they worship what has been created rather than the Creator. They bow before the source of physical light rather than the true light that comes from the Father and the Son; yet if asked, they will claim they are worshiping the Most High God, thereby disclosing that what little knowledge they might have once had has been lost. For Christians everywhere (with very few exceptions) are idolaters, genuflecting before plaster statuary or before a book as if a thing made with hands is somehow God. Even three-plus years into the Tribulation and after two thirds of humankind has been killed, remaining humankind will not cease worshiping those things made with their hands, with a book being the foremost of these things.

Is that book the Bible, the word of God? Yes, that book is the Bible, for unless the person hears the voice of Jesus and hears in Jesus' voice His words and assigns the meanings that Jesus gives to His words in the words of Scripture, the Bible is simply another book printed by men, a work of the hands of men. And it will be this work of the hands, when the plagues make a distinction between who is of God and who isn't, that those who marked themselves for death with the cross will not cease worshiping; for they will use the liberty they find in Scripture to continue doing evil ... even to the end, when Christ Jesus will soon come, evildoers will still do evil (Rev 22:11), and they will use Scripture to support their evil deeds as Pharisees used Scripture to justify killing Jesus of Nazareth.

In the Enlightenment, Western philosophers saw Scripture as a source of evil in this world, the justification of bad behavior undertaken in the name of God, and unfortunately, that is a legacy Sabbatarian Christians have to address today, with *bad behavior* an understatement of the truly evil acts of inquisitors and missionaries. And doubly unfortunate is that Scripture will be used by endtime inquisitors as justification for killing genuine disciples filled with spirit, these disciples identified by their keeping of the commandments and these disciples slain as their fellow servants were slain (Rev 6:9–11) until only a remnant remains (Rev12:17). The seven endtime years of tribulation will see "Christians" making war on *Christians* to the end; for after the second Passover, all eyes will turn toward Christ Jesus and will use the same Scripture passages to support killing brothers and neighbors.

Therefore, it isn't to lexicons or to scholars that genuine disciples look when assigning meaning to Scripture; it is to Christ Jesus. And this is especially true of the Wave Sheaf Offering.

As discussed in yesterday's Sabbath reading, two models exist for when to keep the Passover, with one model pertaining to the first covenant, the covenant made with the fathers of Israel on the night that the Lord led them by the hand out of Egypt—and the other model pertaining to when the New Covenant, or Second Covenant is implemented, with this second model given to the children of Israel and used by Joshua.

Quickly addressing the second model, when the children of Israel chose life or death (Deut 30:15–20) and entered into God's rest as the chosen paschal lamb of the Lord (Josh 4:19), they were at the end of a model that formed the shadow and type of Christian disciples experiencing liberation from indwelling sin and death (Rom 7:15–25) and entering into Christ Jesus' millennial rest (His thousand year long reign as King of kings and Lord of lords). The forty years that Israel wanders in the wilderness of Sin/Zin are analogous to the seven endtime years of tribulation, in that the forty years begin following the first Passover liberation of Israel in Egypt and the seven endtime years begin after the second Passover liberation of Israel, with Israel now being a nation circumcised of heart rather than outwardly circumcised (Rom 2:28–29). Thus, disciples today, having not yet entered the Tribulation, are as Israel was in Egypt—and disciples will remain as Israel was in Egypt until the death angel again passes over all the land. So the model of Israel in the Promised Land eating the Passover on the night that Israel left Egypt (the 15th of Abib), which is necessary in order for the first sheaf to be waved on the following day so that Israel can eat new grain that following day, does not today apply to Israel. Rather, the model initially given applies, for the new self (analogous to the Israelite in Egypt) is not to leave the tent of flesh in which it dwells until morning, a euphemistic expression for the symbolism of “resurrection.”

The Christian Church as the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27) died as the natural body of Christ Jesus died on the cross, and as the natural body was resurrected after the third day, the spiritual Body will be resurrected after the third day (of the Genesis “P” creation account). But the natural body did not immediately ascend to the Father: for twelve or so hours, there is no accounting in Scripture for what the natural body did other than it passed from the tomb without the rock being rolled away (Matt 28:1–7), strongly suggesting that Jesus was glorified throughout the night portion of the 18th of Abib (the first day of the week). Thus, Jesus was glorified prior to ascending to the Father (John 20:17). He could have ascended earlier, but He waited until after daylight, until approximately the hour when the high priest would have waved the first sheaf of ripe barley as the Sadducees understood when the Wave Sheaf Offering was to occur.

The new self or second life Jesus received when the divine breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] descended upon Him as a dove did not leave this earth, its house, until morning ... Jesus was crucified on the fourth or middle day of the natural week, and He was resurrected from death and ascended to the Father on the fourth day or middle day of the spiritual week represented by the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The covenant made at Sinai pertained to the natural creation and the natural weekly cycle (see Ex 20:11) whereas the Second Covenant made on the plains of Moab pertains to the liberation of Israel (see Deut 5:15). The first covenant has forgiveness of sins coming by sins being covered (or passed over) by the blood of the Passover lamb, with Jesus saying, “Drink of it [the blessed cup], all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt 26:27–28). The New Covenant has forgiveness of sins coming through having the Torah written on hearts and placed

within the Israelite so that the Israelite does not sin but obeys the commandments of God: sin will be “covered” by obedience, or by not sinning.

When Israel led by Joshua [Gr: Ἰησοῦ — from Acts 7:45] entered into the Promised Land that the Psalmist identifies as God’s rest (Ps 95:10–11) and that the writer of Hebrews identifies as the Sabbaths of God, Israel began to dwell in the Sabbath as John identifies the entire period of the spring feast:

Οἱ οὖν Ἰουδαῖοι [The then Jews], ἐπεὶ παρασκευῆ ἦν [since preparation (day) it was], ἵνα μὴ μείνη ἐπὶ [that may not stay upon] τοῦ σταυροῦ [the stake] τὰ σώματα [the bodies] ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ [on the Sabbath], ἦν γὰρ μεγάλη ἡ ἡμέρα [was for great the day] ἐκείνου τοῦ σαββάτου [of that the Sabbath] (John 19:31).

The waving of the first sheaf of grain on the morrow after the Sabbath suddenly assumes complexity: if the entire period beginning on the 10th day of Abib through the end of the 22nd day of Abib is considered the Sabbath, which is how John identified the period and what the symbolism suggests, then it is the Sabbaths within “the Sabbath” that assume importance ... there is no record of what day of the week the 15th of Abib fell on in the year Israel entered into God’s rest. The 15th could well have fallen on the weekly Sabbath, for how long it was before Joshua began to march Israel around the walls of Jericho is unknown as is what day was the seventh day of that week. Therefore, while Scripture suggests that Joshua waved the first sheaf of the new harvest on the 16th of Abib, lending some validity to the Pharisees’ practice of always waving the first sheaf on the 16th, Scripture better supports the Sadducees’ practice of waving the first sheaf after the weekly Sabbath that occurs within the seven days of Unleavened Bread.

About the Feast of Weeks, the Lord tells Moses,

You shall count seven full weeks from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering. You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath. Then you shall present a grain offering of new grain to the Lord. You shall bring from your dwelling places two loaves of bread to be waved, made of two tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour, and they shall be baked with leaven, as firstfruits to the Lord. And you shall present with the bread seven lambs a year old without blemish, and one bull from the herd and two rams. They shall be a burnt offering to the Lord, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord. And you shall offer one male goat for a sin offering, and two male lambs a year old as a sacrifice of peace offerings. And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the Lord, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the Lord for the priest. And you shall make proclamation on the same day. You shall hold a holy convocation. You shall not do any ordinary work. It is a statute forever in all your dwelling places throughout your generations. (Lev 23:15–21 emphasis added)

The seventh high Sabbath is the Last Great Day, the day following Sukkoth; so the counted seventh Sabbath has to be a weekly Sabbath, especially if counting is for fifty (50) days and begins on the day of the Wave Sheaf Offering.

The Pharisees’ practice of always waving the first sheaf of the barley harvest on the 16th of Abib is, frankly, wrong and contrary to Scripture. And when the model of Christ Jesus ascending to the Father not when first resurrected from death but at

approximately the hour of the Wave Sheaf Offering (9:00 am) is coupled to the realization that disciples will be “waved” (or ascend to heaven) as the two loaves of *leavened* (baked with sin, the “baking” killing the sin) bread were waved on the Feast of Firstfruits, it can be declared with confidence that disciples are to observe the Wave Sheaf Offering on the first day of the week, or on the morrow after the weekly Sabbath that occurs within the seven days of Unleavened Bread.

Now, what does a disciple do on the day of the Wave Sheaf offering? On the day when Jesus was resurrected, two disciples were on their way to Emmaus, a village seven miles (two hours walk) from Jerusalem—and while they were talking to each other ...

While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” And he said to them, “What things?” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.” And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread. (Luke 24:15–35 emphasis added)

The example Jesus left with His disciples was the explication of Scriptures concerning Him, beginning with Moses and the Prophets. It is this explication of Scripture that should be undertaken on the day when the ascension of the First of the

firstfruits is commemorated. An explication that can be used by beginning fellowships will be undertaken and posted on-line before Passover next year.

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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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