

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and commentary are offered as openings into dialogue about the subject or concept. And the concept behind the readings for this Sabbath is the popular concept of the *antiChrist*.

[Printable/viewable PDF format](#)

Weekly Readings

For the Sabbath of January 14, 2006

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.

The person conducting the services should read or assign to be read Daniel chapters 7, 8, 10, & verses 1 through 4 of chapter 11.

Commentary: As was seen in 1st John last week, denying that Jesus is the Christ, denying that Jesus came as a man, denying that Jesus was flesh and blood—all make a person an antiChrist. But the lawless one, the man of perdition (2 Thess 2:3), is the popularized, actual embodiment of a singular antiChrist that forms the evil, endtime head of a “beast” power, identified by Evangelical and Arian Christians as a latter day revival of the Roman Empire. The *Left Behind* books and now film series presents the dogma of Protestant Dispensation’s portrayal of the antiChrist as a charismatic human being possessed by Satan, and as with all of Dispensation, there is an element of truth supporting the misconception. There isn’t, however, enough truth to withstand a “close reading” of the inspired text:

When the prophet Daniel received knowledge of a great conflict (Dan 10:1) that would, in the latter days (v. 14), affect Daniel’s people, the natural nation of Israel, the *sar* [prince or king] of Persia withstood the angel coming to Daniel for twenty-one days. Only when the archangel Michael intervened on behalf of the messenger could this angel get away from the kings (v. 13) of Persia—and when this messenger returned from visiting Daniel, he would have to fight with the *sar* of Persia, then would come the *sar* of Greece. The angel bringing the prophet Daniel knowledge of what is written in the book of truth wasn’t fighting against human kings of Persia, or a human king of Greece. Daniel’s reaction to seeing this angel would have been typical of any human being’s response. No earthly king would have any strength to oppose this angel. So rebelling angelic beings are identified by the angel bringing Daniel knowledge of what is written in the book of truth as kings or princes of Persia, and the singular king or prince [*sar*] of Greece. And the great conflict that will effect the nation of Israel in the latter days involves these rebelling angels; for in the latter days, Israel will be a spiritual nation to whom life in the heavenly realm has been given by birth from above through receipt of the Holy Spirit.

The comparative relationship between the human king of Babylon or of Persia and an enslaved natural Israelite in Chaldea—the relationship between King Nebuchadnezzar and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—is an apt representation of the relationship and relative power of the angelic *sar* of Persia and a born-again disciple. Every “Christian” who has been born-from-above has actual life [*pneuma*] in the heavenly realm through possessing the Holy Spirit [*Pneuma 'Agion*], and every Christian has an elder brother who will be with the disciple during fiery trials. But as angelic *sars* are invisible to human eyes, so is the life received through being born of Spirit and so is a disciple’s elder brother. The conscious minds of disciples must, by faith, believe that which cannot be seen physically exists spiritually.

In all things, the natural precedes the spiritual (1 Cor 15:46), and the visible reveals the invisible (Rom 1:20). Thus, as there was/is a visibly circumcised natural or physical nation of Israel, holy to *YHWH*, its *Elohim* (Exod 20:2), there is now a spiritual nation of Israel, a chosen race, holy (1 Pet 2:9) to the Father [*Theon* from John 1:1] and the Son [the *Logos* or *Theos*], the Father’s Christ. *Elohim* is the regular plural of *Eloah*, which deconstructs to *IEl*, and *lah*, or God + aspirated breath. *Allah* is the direct translation of *Eloah* into Arabic. But the deity Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worshiped was the plural form of *Eloah*, even though this plural usually takes a singular verb; for *Elohim* created humankind in its image, male and female humankind was created (Gen 1:26-27) and the two became one flesh (Gen 2:24). And this agrees with the deconstruction of the tetragrammaton *YHWH*, which reveals two deities (*/YH/+/WH/*) with their respective breaths (Rom 8:9-11). These two deities function as one, with the *Logos* speaking the words of *Theon* both before He was born as the man Jesus of Nazareth and during His earthly ministry. Jesus, however, says that only the Father is God (John 20:17)—and the natural nation of Israel never knew the Father, and except for the vision of Daniel, had little knowledge about the Father, who is the Ancient of Days.

One like a son of man (Dan 7:13) is not the Ancient of Days, but is presented before the Ancient of Days...as angelic *sars* of Persia and Greece are invisible to human eyes, so, too, are the Ancient of Days and the thousands of thousands that serve Him invisible. The spiritual nation of Israel is invisibly circumcised through writing the laws of God on hearts and minds (Heb 8:10 & Jer 31:33). This latter nation of Israel consists of spiritual sons of God presently housed in tents of flesh while the nation individually and collectively matures, but the house in which a child matures isn’t the child. Likewise, the fleshly tent in which a son of God matures isn’t the born of Spirit son. Whether the house in which a human child dwells has indoor or outdoor plumbing, or whether the house is painted white or brown or red or yellow, or whether the house is purchased or rented or handed down through generations doesn’t change the potential of the child. Likewise, sons of God are neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, free nor bond (Gal 3:28); they are not the tents in which they dwell. So the juxtaposition of natural Israel living in fabric or animal skin tents after leaving Egypt/sin with spiritual Israel living in fleshly tents holds. A physically circumcised Israelite, a Levite to be specific, serving in the fabric tabernacle—this tent housing the wood ark of the covenant, inside of which were two stone tablets (on which the visible finger of God wrote His commandments), the earthly jar of manna and Aaron’s

bedded staff, and alongside of which was the book of Deuteronomy as the witness against Israel (Deu 31:26 & John 5:45-46)—forms the lively shadow of a spiritual Israelite, a member of the royal priesthood called out of darkness and into the marvelous light of Christ Jesus (1 Pet 2:9-10). Endtime Israel does not, today, encompass the natural nation of Israel, or the nation that presently occupies Judah. Rather, endtime Israel has life in the heavenly realm through birth from above, and this holy nation, presently housed or imprisoned in tents of flesh that will die, must be liberated from death, from the north country, from Assyria and far corners of the earth.

Thus, in Daniel's visions kings and princes of Persia are angelic beings that make war against an angelic messenger from the Most High, and this messenger needed the assistance of Michael, one of the chief princes, to reach Daniel. And the little horn spoke great words before [or against] the throne of the Ancient of Days; the little horn is also an angelic being, for no human being will speak great words to the Most High.

The reader should now read Isaiah chapter 14.

Commentary: When God again gives Israel rest—He gave Israel rest when the children of the nation that left Egypt entered Judea, and under several of the judges, then again when Solomon sat on David's throne—the nation will taunt the king of Babylon. But this king of Babylon isn't Nebuchadnezzar, or any human king. Rather, this king has fallen from heaven; this king is Satan the devil. So when Israel as a spiritual nation enters God's rest (which is first the Sabbaths of God, then Christ's millennial reign, then heaven itself), the king of Babylon will be brought down to the pit (v. 15) *to be bound for a thousand years (Rev 20:1-3).*

The wisdom necessary to understand biblical prophecies begins with understanding Hebraic poetics: a thing, a concept is initially presented in darkness or distance or both, then restated with movement toward light or life. Hence, what the hand does becomes what the heart desires (Matt 5:21-22); what the body does becomes what the mind thinks (vv. 27-28). And King Nebuchadnezzar represents the spiritually lifeless shadow of Satan, the spiritual king of Babylon, his kingdom represented by the humanoid image that Nebuchadnezzar saw in his vision (Dan 2:31-35). Thus, spiritual Babylon reigns as world ruler over the mental landscape of human beings, this invisible topology made visible by the geographical terrain of physical Babylon. And in this land of Babylon resides the greater portion of spiritual Israel.

The reader should now read Jeremiah chapter 16.

Commentary: Because the natural nation of Israel forsook *YHWH*, its *Elohim*, and did not keep its *Elohim's* laws, this natural nation was forcibly removed from God's rest—but the son is not responsible for the sins of his father. Endtime Israel will not be recovered from Assyria, from Chaldea because of the lawlessness of the natural nation. Rather, the spiritually holy nation of God will be

recovered from death because **its own lawlessness caused Father and Son to bodily throw this nation out of the mental landscape representing Their rest, the weekly Sabbath**. The greater Christian Church observes none of the Sabbaths of God, and actually compounds its lawbreaking by deliberately making the weekly Sabbath its primary shopping day. The greater Church has relaxed what it regards as the least of the Commandments, and it teaches new disciples to likewise relax the Sabbath Commandment (Matt 5:19). At best, the teachers and pundits, preachers and priests of greater Christianity will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. However, it remains doubtful whether any of these preachers and priests will enter the kingdom of heaven, for their righteousness does not exceed that of the Pharisees (v. 20), who had the law of God near to them (Deu 30:11), but didn't keep it (John 7:19).

The question of which came first—lawbreaking or mentally rejecting the Sabbath—might not be easily determined, for not keeping the weekly Sabbath is lawlessness, is sin (1 John 3:4). Plus, seventeen, eighteen centuries later it doesn't really matter which came first. A remnant of spiritual Israel left Babylon nearly five centuries ago for the express purpose of rebuilding the house of God in the Jerusalem above. This remnant crossed into God's rest three plus centuries ago (its journey was/is mental as is the identity of this holy nation), but this remnant has fallen upon the spiritual equivalent of the hard times that the remnant of natural Israelites under Sheshbazzar (Ezra 1:8 & Neh 1:3) suffered. Work on the house of God fell into great trouble and shame when this spiritual remnant from Babylon set about building their own houses, building denominations whose dogmas reveal how far or near the builder of the house was when the denomination stopped its journey to the Jerusalem above.

As the majority of the natural Israel remained in Babylon when the remnant left for the Land Beyond the River, the majority of Christianity remained in spiritual Babylon when the Radical Reformers of the 16th-Century sought to rebuild the Church from the Bible by jettisoning every tradition of the *old Church*, the Roman Church. Reformers within the *old Church* and Protestant Reformers sought to use the Bible to reform the *old Church*, but the lawlessness that initially sent the Church into spiritual Babylon remained/remains embedded within the traditions of the *old Church*. No Christian can individually or collectively leave Babylon and keep the traditions of the *old Church*; therefore, historical exegesis leaves disciples in spiritual Babylon and worshipping its king, the prince of this world. Hence, trappings of the *old Church* mentally kept/keeps the holy nation of spiritually circumcised Israel in Babylon. And the history of natural Israel from Solomon's reign forward to Nehemiah forms the lively (but layered) shadow of the history of the Christian Church in the heavenly realm from the 1st-Century to the time of the end.

That period of human history known as "the time of the end" sits in the spiritual gap represented by the years between when Sheshbazzar arrived in Jerusalem with the treasures of the former temple and the Passover following the completed temple's dedication.

The reader should now read Ezra chapter 6, verses 13 through 21.

Commentary: Disciples are today the lively stones of the temple of God (1 Pet 2:4-5 & 1 Cor 3:16-17), shaped off-site so no sound of iron [no chastising] will be heard at the temple mount. The gold vessels of the temple are analogous to disciples who have cleaned the inside of the cup and are clean all over, analogous to individually held knowledge of God. And the Passover that begins the new calendar year after the spiritual temple is dedicated begins Christ Jesus' millennial reign as King of kings and Lord of lords...the old year ends with the month of Adar (Ezra 6:15).

When the restored temple was dedicated, a few weeks of the old year remained. When these weeks are added to the first two weeks of the new year, plus the week of Unleavened Bread, in the layered texture of Scripture, the weeks [seven altogether] represent the seven endtime years of tribulation that are the reality of the seven days of Unleavened Bread. The second High Day of Passover commemorates the return of Christ Jesus as the Messiah; the first High Day represents the dedication of the spiritual temple through the liberation of disciples from the law of sin and death that presently dwells in their fleshly members (Rom 7:25).

Jesus of Nazareth as the first of the firstfruits was sacrificed at Calvary as the reality of the paschal Lamb of God. But what prophecy discloses is when liberated from the law of sin and death that now dwells in their flesh, disciples will also be sacrificed as the revealed body of the Son of Man. Righteous disciples will physically die. Rebellious disciples will spiritually die. And the remnant of spiritual Israel that left Babylon doesn't want to hear that it will not be physically spared once the seven endtime years begin. Rather, this remnant wants to believe an escapist myth about going to a place of safety where it will not be forced to deal with a man of perdition who comes by the workings of Satan. It fears this abomination of desolation more than it fears Christ Jesus. So the escapist myth takes cowardly disciples either into heaven, or to Petra. Either direction is the result of carnal thinking.

Saints do, however, have a reason for concern: when liberated from the law of sin and death that now dwells in their flesh, disciples will be delivered into the hand of the little horn of Daniel chapter seven for a time, times and half a time (3½ years — v. 25). They will be tried as Jesus was, and will be widely martyred as the revealed body of the Son of Man. But because death will no longer be within them, for them to die, they will yield their lives as Jesus yielded His so that all righteousness would be fulfilled. Pilate could not have taken the life of Jesus, who had the power and authority to call angels to His rescue. Only Jesus could take His physical life from Himself. Likewise, sin cannot harm the processed fruits [the oil and the wine] of God's rest, and these processed fruits are disciples who have been refined prior to when the endtime tribulation begins. But these processed fruits are not all of the harvest of God's rest: sin will weigh in the balances, and will buy and sell the early barley harvest and the latter wheat harvest. And if a spiritually circumcised disciple values his or her physical life more than the disciple loves "Truth," the disciple will temporarily save that physical life at the expense of losing his or her spiritual life. The disciple will take the mark of the beast upon whose head the little horn appears—and this tattoo of the beast that devours and breaks in pieces and stomps what is left will mark the person for death when Christ Jesus returns. This mark of death is the tattoo of the Cross

[*chi xi stigma*], the means by which Jesus surrendered His physical life, again, so that all righteousness would be fulfilled. Jesus established the visible example or path by which a human being becomes a son of God, created fully in the image and after the likeness of *Elohim* (Gen 1:26). And there is no other path across the dimensional barrier between the physical creation and the heavenly realm.

Next week's reading will return to the visions of the prophet Daniel. The four horns or kings that sprout from the stump of the broken first horn on the head of the *sar* of Greece are the same four kings or beasts that emerge from the sea; they are also the four horsemen of the Apocalypse. And the fourth horseman is named Death (Rev 6:8), and this beast is dealt a mortal wound when the two witnesses are publicly resurrected at the end of the second woe. The timeframe for when this king is taken captive, his body given over to be burned, and his head dealt its mortal wound is when the court of the Ancient of Days sits in judgment (Dan 7:11). The other three kings have their dominion [their authority to rule over humanity] taken from them, but they also have their lives extended for a season and a time (v. 12). They are, again, three of the four horns of the *sar* of Greece, and their post-judgment appearance in Scripture is as the first beast of Revelation chapter 13. A season and a time apparently equals forty-two months—a fruiting season (going from new growth on a fruiting spur, to the spur budding, then blooming the following spring, followed by fruit in the second autumn) is two growing years. This season is the equivalent of the two weeks between the new year and Passover, thereby suggesting that the last year of the seven endtime years of tribulation is represented by Unleavened Bread, which in another layering of narrative texture represents all of seven years for the saints. The suggestion is that the harvest of the third part of humanity (Zech 13:9) will have ripened, and that this third part will be living without sin for a full year when Christ returns. This suggestion would have the third part—as the natural nation of Israel under the leadership of Joshua and Caleb defeated the Canaanites occupying Judea—mentally defeating the old serpent, Satan the devil, when he is cast into time.

Indeed, empowered, born-from-above human beings will mentally prevail against Satan and his angels through enduring to the end: all who endure to the end shall be saved (again, Matt 24:13). However, under present conditions or paradigms, human beings cannot defeat the beast that devours, tramples, and stomps; the fleshly tent in which every disciple lives is subject to sin and death. The Apostle Paul said that he didn't understand this mystery; he didn't understand that the Church would be empowered by the Holy Spirit, set entirely free from sin and death, and would also be the acceptable sacrificial lamb offered by God for the third part of humanity.

The reader should now read Zechariah chapter 13, verses 7 through 9.

Commentary: The sword is called to strike the man who stands next to the Lord of hosts. Jesus identified that man as Himself (Matt 26:31), and indeed, John tells disciples that as the *Logos* Jesus was *Theos* and was with *Theon* (John 1:1-2). Prior to Him coming as His son, His only (John 3:16-17),

the *Logos* stood beside the Most High—and it will be the Most High who turns His hand against the little ones, cutting off two parts, leaving one part alive to be changed in the twinkling of an eye. This one part [or third part] will be the physically living portion of the great endtime harvest when Jesus returns as the Messiah.

Humanity will be divided into three parts, analogous to the three sons of the first Adam and the first Eve. The firstborn son of the last Adam and last Eve has had sin lurking at his door; this firstborn son teaches a lawless gospel that has him attempting to enter God's rest on the following day. But the second-born son, like righteous Abel, will be slain by the firstborn son when both sons are delivered into the hand of the little horn, the man of perdition. And human beings during Christ Jesus' millennial reign will biologically descend from the third part of humanity that will become a spiritual Seth when the Holy Spirit is poured upon all flesh. This third part will be a mental, though, not physical grouping. It will consist of all human beings who were not previously born of Spirit.

Presently, birth by Spirit comes only by election, but will again come by covenant when the seven endtime years begin.

Except for power given to Death to kill a fourth part of humanity, the man of perdition could not harm any liberated saint once the endtime years of tribulation begin. But the Most High will deliver the saints into the hand of the man of perdition to kill all but a remnant (Rev 12:17). These slain saints will, as Jesus surrendered His life at Calvary, surrender their lives, for the disciple is not better than his teacher nor the servant better than his master (Matt 10:24-25).

Thus, it is not enough for disciples to return to the Jerusalem above after centuries in spiritual Babylon: these disciples have work to do, and they work while being hindered by spiritual *Sanballets* (Neh 4:1-3). This work includes delivering the good news that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13); for this is the gospel that will be proclaimed to the world as a witness to all nations before the end comes (v. 14). This work also includes telling the spiritually circumcised nation of Israel that once liberated from sin and death, empowered saints will be delivered into the hand of the lawless one, who will either cause these saints to commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit or will kill these saints. Blasphemy will cost liberated saints their spiritual lives, and when Christ returns, their physical lives. So either immediately or a few years later, saints delivered into the hand of the little horn will be slain by the Cross. There is no physical escape for the person who has surrendered his or her life to Jesus through baptism.

The rebuilt temple was dedicated three days into the last month of the old year: Adar. Blessed will be the Israelite who physically sees the new year 1,335 days later. This person will be part of the remnant that Satan goes after but cannot defeat.

The person conducting the Sabbath service should close services with two hymns, or psalms, followed by a prayer asking God's dismissal.

* * * * *

"Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright ©2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved."