

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and commentary for this week are more in line with what has become usual; for the following will most likely be familiar observations. The concept behind this Sabbath's selection is Jesus' Body as the Temple.

## Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of April 4, 2009

*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 service should read or assign to be read John chapter 2, verses 13 through 22.*

**Commentary:** When Jesus said, "Destroy this temple," those who heard Him speak thought they heard Jesus say that He would destroy the temple building (Matt 26:61). Certainly, the response of the temple officials suggested they believed Jesus said that He would destroy the temple. And Jesus said that He would destroy the temple, not just the temple of his body (John 2:22) but Herod's temple — but He wouldn't destroy the temple by tearing it down, but by liberating it from bondage to death/lifelessness.

Many disciples seek literalism, that is a hard linked meaning (linguistic object) for each word, not realizing that they assign meanings to words, that words do not come with little backpacks saying what they mean, that since the Tower of Babel reader communities have linked meanings to linguistic icons in an unholy alliance of the profane with the sacred. And communication between reading communities comes from assigning the same objects to a icon ... if a Christian does not assign the same object or meaning to a word as Christ Jesus assigned to the word, with Jesus only speaking the words of the Father meaning that Jesus used the words of this world to describe and to name the things of heaven making everything He said a metaphor or figurative language, then the Christian does not hear the voice of Jesus and is far from salvation.

A text, any text including Scripture, only carries whatever meaning the reader can bring to the words. If the reader doesn't know to assign a certain meaning to a word, say to "temple," then the reader will not assign that meaning to the word. Thus, when John tells readers that when Jesus said, *Destroy the temple*, Jesus meant "His body" as the referent for "temple," John introduces the metaphor that the temple is Jesus' body. Paul adds to this by saying that the Church is the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27); thus, the Church is the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16) in the same way that Jesus meant His body was the temple.

But John also records Jesus saying [here is the citation for the second paragraph], "I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no

longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father” (John 16:25). What things? Certainly the things He said to His disciples on the night He was taken. But His disciples understood Jesus to say that everything He had spoken to them was in figures of speech; for again, Jesus only spoke the words of the Father ... words, whether Greek or Hebrew (or English or any other human language) are utterances or signs in this world to which the objects/things of this world are assigned to them by that unholy alliance—and since Jesus only spoke the words of the Father, words that described the things of heaven, Jesus could only speak in metaphorical language, using the words of this world to name and describe the things of heaven.

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which one thing is said to be another thing. The temple is Jesus’ body ... no, it isn’t. In a literal world, the temple is the temple, and Jesus’ body is His body, and to “destroy the sanctuary” is to tear it down. In a literal world, the Church is the Church, and disciples are disciples. But if disciples have received a second breath of life by receiving the divine breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], then this second life is not of this world and can only be discussed in metaphors — and metaphorically disciples who have received a second breath of life as Jesus, Himself, received a second breath of life when the breath of the Father descended upon Him as a dove (Matt 3:16) have received life that has come down from heaven as Jesus both came down from heaven and received a second breath of life that had come down from heaven, with this second “breath—*pneuma*” being a metaphor that uses moving air as in deep breath or in wind to name an “invisible force” that functions in heaven as air functions in this world.

If a person restricts him or herself to literal meanings, which in itself is nonsensical since meanings are assigned to words [e.g., what does the word “malix” mean], the person is as Isaiah described Israel, able to hear but deaf, able to see but blind. Only infants are unable to use dual referents, where one sign simultaneously represents two or more objects/things. And only spiritual infants cannot make the transition from the words of this world representing the things of this world to these same words representing the things of heaven; i.e., the things of God. Thus, to understand what Jesus said when He said, *Destroy this temple*, the disciple who is no longer a spiritual infant, able only to handle milk (a metaphor Paul uses), will take meaning from Scripture through typological exegesis that has the words of this world naming the things of heaven.

To build on Jesus saying, Αὔσατε τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον [Destroy the sanctuary this], Jesus would not raise Himself from death but would ask the Father to return to Him the glory He had before (John 17:5). Paul says, addressing the righteousness based on faith, that if an Israelite has returned to keeping the commandments under the Moab covenant (Rom 10:6–8), this Israelite only has to “confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead” (v. 9) and the Israelite would be saved. Elsewhere Paul says, “If the Spirit [breath] of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies” (Rom 8:11). Clearly Jesus did not raise Himself from the dead; thus it wasn’t Jesus who would raise up His dead body in three days if Jesus truly identified the sanctuary as His body as John suggests, meaning that John’s statement in 2:21 tends to mislead the reader, especially the literalist who wants a temple to be a temple and not a human body, but will accept Jesus’ body as a temple because that is how John identified it.

The temple, for 46 years, had been in bondage to death; for it was a structure composed of inert stone.

If a disciple were to transform what John said about Jesus saying, *Destroy this temple*, meaning to take life away from Jesus' body and Jesus would live again in three days into an image (i.e., turn John's words into an object) and then place this image in front of a mirror, the image in the mirror would have life being given to the temple ... the chiral image of a living entity being destroyed by death coming upon the entity is not death coming upon another entity, but life being given to a non-living (dead) entity. Thus, the chiral image of Jesus' body dying is Jesus' body living, which is what happened with Jesus dying at Calvary on Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib (Lyyar on the calculated calendar) of 31 CE, then being resurrected and ascending to the Father on the 18<sup>th</sup> of Abib, with Jesus being in the heart of the earth all of the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> days of the month.

But Jesus doesn't say, *Kill Me and I will live again after three days*. Rather, Jesus introduces a metaphor that has the temple being His body. Literally (said for *literalists* reading), Jesus said, *The temple is my body*, which immediately causes problems by posing two unaddressed questions: (1) when did the temple become Jesus' body, and (2) when will the temple cease being Jesus' body? For the reality of every metaphor is that *one thing* is not *another thing* even though it is said to be *the thing*. A metaphor only holds true for a short expanse, or until closely examined. Yet John says in 2:21 that Jesus established a metaphor that biblical literalists cannot slip around but must squarely address.

Paul uses another metaphor when he says that disciples, individually and collectively, are the Body of Christ and by extension, the temple, and that he laid the foundation for the temple (1 Cor 3:10–11), meaning that the temple is an unfinished structure that will grow to be New Jerusalem, a city that is the Bride of Christ and a city of pure gold, clear as glass ... the metaphor Jesus introduced and to which John made sure that even biblical literalists couldn't miss is expanded by Paul to include all disciples who will be glorified and expanded again in Jesus' revelation to John. Thus, the disciple who hears Jesus' voice will think in metaphoric language as the words which the disciple inherits through being a son of the first Adam must be used to name and discuss and comprehend the things of God in heaven and in the inter-dimensional heavenly realm. No one can know anything of God if the person insists that only referents (linguistic objects) confined to this world be assigned to the words (linguistic icons) of this world. This person has no way to talk about or to know the Father and the Son. This person is condemned by the prophet Isaiah, who used Hebraic poetics to talk about the things of heaven through the repetition of earthly icons.

Considering the rarity of pure gold as clear as glass, meaning that this gold doesn't reflect light hence is not dead but is living gold thereby assigning to the icon "gold" an object not of this world (for New Jerusalem is not of this world) but of heaven, the following metaphoric juxtapositions hold:

- The promise to punish Babylon after seventy years (Jer 25:11–12) and to bring Israel back to Judea after seventy years (Jer 29:10), with these years beginning in 586 BCE, sees a remnant of Israel return to Jerusalem between years 539 to 537 BCE; so a remnant of Israel returns before the seventy years transpire.

- But the temple, razed in 586 BCE, is not rebuilt and dedicated until 516 BCE, making the temple not Israel absent from Jerusalem for seventy years, and making the temple the “Israel” the Lord [YHWH] referenced when He spoke to Jeremiah.
- Jesus as the male child to whom the Woman gave birth, the male child who is to rule all nations and who is caught up to God and His throne (Rev 12:5), will now have the Woman as Israel being the temple, destroyed at Calvary.
- Thus, the Woman as Israel is the temple, with “the temple” being a euphemism for the natural descendants of the patriarch, and with the offspring of the Woman being the sect of the Nazarenes.
- Israel “destroys” Israel when the people (Jews) shouted to Pilate, “His blood be on us and on our children” (Matt 27:25); Israel took upon itself responsibility for killing the Grantor of the covenant by which Israel was made the holy nation of God (Ex 19:5–6).

If disciples today are the temple of God, Paul’s claim (his comprehension of the metaphor Jesus used), and if disciples are Israel, a nation now circumcised of heart (Rom 2:28–29), then it is reasonable to hold that Israel was before the temple of God, a metaphorical use of language that introduces the best argument yet for “showing” that human beings are not born with immortal souls.

The following is from an article titled, “The New Covenant,” found on the *Second Passover* website:

There is a translation problem in going from Greek to English that is serious enough the problem must be addressed: the English word “breath” derives from the Germanic root *bhreu-*, used for “to brew” and metonymically used to represent the steam rising from brewing or from a simmering kettle. The connection of the linguistic icon to exhaled breath is reasonable considering that for much of the year a person can see his or her breath in Germanic lands. But a person cannot usually see his or her breath in Greece.

The English icon “spirit” comes into the language as a Norman French loan word derived from the Latin icon *spīritus*, usually assigned the meaning of “breath” or “the breath of a god.”

The Greek icon representing deep breath or wind or moving air is *πνεῦμα*—*pneuma*, the root for English words such as *pneumonia* [pertaining to the breath] or phrases such as *pneumatic tools* [powered by moving air].

In moving from Greek to Latin, *πνεῦμα* is translated as *spīritus*, as both icons represent breath. The translation is valid; thus, *πνεῦμα ἅγιον* [*breath holy*] makes sense in Latin as “*sacra spīritus*,” which when translated into English should be rendered “holy breath” but isn’t. It is, instead, translated as “the Holy Spirit,” assigned personhood (a carry-over from Latin paganism), and made a god ... what should at best be rendered as “the breath of a god” becomes a god, thereby effectively precluding most endtime disciples from understanding the mysteries of God.

Satan could not have more effectively imprisoned a people in unbelief than has occurred by assigning personhood to the breath of the Father.

Because *πνεῦμα* isn’t usually translated into English as “breath” but as “spirit” the people perish for lack of knowledge: where the context demands, *πνεῦμα* is translated as “wind” — e.g., John 3:8 — and where heavenly beings are addressed it is sometimes

translated as “breath” — e.g., Rev 13:15; 2 Thess 2:8 — but in simple passages that should be easily understood the substitution of “spirit” for “breath” leads to theological disaster. For example, 1 Corinthians 2:11 is usually translated in some variation, “For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him.” By rendering τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου as *the spirit of a person* instead of “the breath of a person,” with *breath* used as a metonym for *life*, a theological premise has developed that would have there being a human spirit in a person that is separate from human nature and separate from the *old self* or nature. The premise is false. There is human breath that gives life to the person through cellular transfer of oxygen molecules in a person’s blood stream, and there is the old self or nature that empowers the flesh, with this old self or nature being crucified with Christ Jesus when a new self or new nature is received via receipt of a second breath of life. There is one breath of life that supplies oxygen to the flesh to maintain physical life, and there is a second breath of life that gives life to the new creature or new nature received from God—that transforms or gives life to the “dead” old self or nature in a manner directly analogous to the second temple going from a lifeless stone building to being the living Body of Christ. There is no third breath of life. There is no spirit of man that returns to God at death. Certainly human breath returns of God in that it ceases to be at death. And the lives received via receipt of the divine breath of God sleep as souls [ψυχᾶς—*psuche* or shallow breaths] under the altar of God (Rev 6:9) while awaiting glorification (there is no consciousness in death; physical sleep forms the shadow and copy of death for the son of God awaiting resurrection). But the lives of the righteous who died in faith prior to Christ are recorded in a book of remembrance (Mal 3:16) when their breaths are lost and their bodies return to dust. They have no human spirits that are to be pressed between the pages of this book of remembrances as if their human spirits were fallen leaves gathered when lives end.

A person knows the things of a man because the Father has instilled in human beings biological software activated by inside-the-brain puffs of nitrous oxide, with this biological software functioning very much like computer software and the nitrous oxide like off/on switches. When King Nebuchadnezzar had his human nature taken from him for seven years, this software was overwritten by the software God gives to a beast (an ox). It was returned to what it was before when the king’s reason returned to him. And it is this software that constitutes the old self or old nature that is crucified with Christ so that the disciple will be resurrected with a new nature that has come down from God as the man Jesus came down from heaven as the only Son of the Logos — this biological software is as lifeless as computer software, but the new creature or new self is actual life that has come from the Father; thus the Father has raised the person from the dead (John 5:21). And the Son will or will not cause the mortal flesh in which this new creature temporarily dwells to put on immortality when judgments are revealed. Either way, at the death of the tent of flesh in which this new creature dwells, this new creature will sleep until the revealing of judgments. And this entire scenario is not comprehensible if the disciple either believes that human beings are born with immortal souls (breaths) or if the disciple believes that there is a spirit in man apart from the life given to the man that causes a man to know the thing of men ... wind [πνεῦμα] can blow in and out of a man’s nostrils for years, but if there is no life in the man this moving air is nothing more than desert breezes stirring up dust devils. What causes a man to know the things of a man is the life that causes a man to breathe.

The metaphor Jesus introduces when He says, *Destroy this temple*, works at two levels, with the first level having the lifeless stone of Herod's temple become the living stones (1 Pet 2:4–5) of the house of God, of which Jesus was the cornerstone when He was resurrected from death, and will be the capstone when He returns to reveal judgments made during this Christian era.

The second level is more complex: a person lives because of the “life” breathed into the nostrils of the first Adam (Gen 2:7), this life causing the flesh to grow and reproduce itself through the cellular oxidation of sugars, thereby permitting the metaphoric expression, *the life is in the blood*, to be true. Some thoughts are hormonally driven (e.g., the truism behind the country music song about “all of the girls are prettier at closing time”), but those thoughts that cause a “man” to be a *man* and not a beast come with “human nature” as opposed to the “nature” of a beast. They come via the breath that gives life to a person, and not by any second breath identified as the *spirit of man*. They come via what Paul identifies as *the old man* or old self or old nature, the nature every human being receives as a consequence of having life derived from breathing air (i.e., via the breath given to the first Adam). And this “human nature” is not usually considered an entity apart from the fleshly body it activates. Yet, the example of King Nebuchadnezzar having his reason taken from him for seven years supports the concept that the biological software that makes a man *a man* comes from God in some form analogous to a computer software download.

When the Father gives to a person He has drawn from this world to be a firstborn son of His and a younger sibling to Christ Jesus “life” via receipt of His divine *breath*, which isn't human breath but a heavenly force that functions in the heavenly realm as moving air or as deep human breath functions in this world, thereby causing the Greek icon πνεῦμα to be a metaphor that says “moving air” or “deep human breath” is not *like* the breath of God but “is” the breath of God ... a metaphor is in play, not a simile, something biblical literalists need to understand — when the Father gives to a disciple life via πνεῦμα θεοῦ, the Father causes the biological software activating a human being to have life in the same way that “life” was breathed into the man of mud, a lifeless human appearing corpse until *Elohim* [singular in usage] breathed into the nostrils of the first Adam.

Imagine what the first Adam looked like before he became a *nephesh*: the base elements of the earth were assembled together, sculpted and shaped and made to look like a man ... the flesh looked like flesh but was without life. The man of mud could remain as he was for only a short while before he began to fall apart. And he was, in this lifeless state, directly analogous to the biological software that runs a human being. He couldn't grow any, couldn't repair himself, couldn't do much, and certainly couldn't get up and walk uprightly as a man. But as soon as *Elohim* breathed into his nostrils the breath of “life,” the man of mud became a breathing creature: all of his biological systems began functioning. He was created as an adult human being so he would not grow physically (just as the last Adam would not grow spiritually, but was already mature), but from him came Eve and all future sons of Adam, each of whom (unlike Adam and Eve) were born as physical infants and would have to grow to physical maturity.

Social scientists who specialize in child behavior used to contend that a child's personality and character was established by age six; that number was moved back to

age three about forty years ago. Since then, research suggests that a child's character is set by age one, or by the time the child can walk uprightly.

Metaphorically, circumcision requires an Israelite to walk uprightly and be blameless before God (Gen 17:1–2), with walking uprightly as a human being walks becoming the visible, physical representation of living without sin, which places the patriarch Abraham as being a shadow and type of Christ Jesus, a metaphoric connection that Paul makes (Gal 3:29) ... biblical literalists have a problem with Paul, with this problem going back to the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE. Thus, in the human maturation process is the model for spiritual maturation: a human infant begins life unable to even crawl, but without any apparent work being done by the child, the infant first crawls, then upon seeing adults or older siblings walking, the child stands and totters across a floor, occasionally falling for no apparent reason—and so it is with spiritual maturation once the Father calls a person from this world and gives to the person a second breath of life. Disciples are to walk uprightly before God, not shamle along as beasts. Grace (the mantle of Christ's righteousness) covers all of those falls disciples experience so that they are not seen by anyone other than the person and Christ Jesus. Eventually the child matures enough to use dual referents, but the infant walked long before this infant is able to comprehend dual referents or to drive the family car (an earthly analogy for using the Holy Spirit as Jesus used it and as Paul used it). And it is walking uprightly (i.e., living without sin by keeping the commandments) that marks when a son of God's personality is established.

What is seen in the human infant analogy is that it's not possible for a son of God to comprehend dual referents or to take meaning from Scripture via typological exegesis prior to this son of God keeping the commandments and walking as Jesus walked. What is also seen is a stage of development between when the son of God begins keeping the commandments and when this son is able to use typological exegesis to take meaning from Scripture—it is in this stage where most Sabbatarian disciple now live as spiritual infants still suckling the paps of Scripture when they are old enough to walk uprightly.

For those able to handle dual referents, *Yah* breathed into the man of mud's nostrils, thereby imparting life to the flesh as the Father gives life through His "breath" to the biological software that causes a man to know the things of a man. This is what's seen when the temple goes from a stone building to being a building of living stones. Mud is powdered stone and water. When "life" is added to this mud (i.e., to stone), the mud becomes a person, a living breathing human being—and of all human beings, Abraham was chosen to be the cultivar of God, chosen because of his faith. Now, of all human beings, the Father chooses some to be firstfruits of the harvest of the earth (i.e., to be His firstborn sons), and He gives life to their biological software, thereby permitting that software to grow spiritually as a human infant grows physically, with these *sons* experiencing an invisible (to the eye) growth process that mirrors the person's physical maturation. But as many human beings came from Adam, with only Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and the seven with him crossing from the former world into this world, many sons of God have come and will come from the Father giving life through receipt of His breath to human beings; however, only those who follow Christ Jesus will cross from this present world into the kingdom of the heavens, with those who follow Christ Jesus being analogous to the seven pair of clean animals (i.e., disciples who are of the seven named churches) and to the single pair of unclean animals (i.e., disciples who have about them a different spirit as Caleb, of Esau, had about him, with Caleb adopting the ways of Israel when Israel was still in Egypt).

It is a big deal that Jesus liberates (destroys) the temple on the temple's year of jubilee, with this "destruction" of the temple coming by giving life to the second temple by rebuilding the temple after three days into the living Body of Christ, thereby transforming lifeless stone into living stone. The correspondence to this liberation holds that the lifeless biological software that causes a person to know the things of this world but also prevents the person from knowing the things of God is transformed into living software through receipt of the divine breath of the Father, software that permits the "new self" to know the things of God, to grow spiritually and to mature as a son of God, and to repair the "self" as living tissue repairs itself. The damage that was done to the old self by any number of causes should die with baptism but often doesn't. However, as living flesh heals itself with discernable surface scarring but with stronger muscle mass and stronger bones, the new self will heal itself so disciples really cannot use those things that have happened to them as valid justification for continuing in wrongdoing of any kind.

Much more can be said about the glory of the temple leaving the first and not returning to the second temple until the man Jesus cleansed the temple, a type of disciples examining themselves especially at this Passover season and purging from within themselves those things that defile the temple.

- The second temple built by Zerubbabel was holy as holy meat hidden in the fold of a garment (Haggai chap 2); it was not holy because of the glory of God being present in it.
- The temple built by Herod was not holy as holy meat, but was a building subject to a foreign ruler.

When the glory of the Lord left the temple in Jerusalem prior to the sacking of this temple (Ezek chap 10), the prophet records that something like a sapphire [or *lapis lazuli* — a blue stone] in the shape of a throne spoke to the man in linen, telling the man in linen to scatter burning coals over the city of Jerusalem (10:2) ... in the sixth year of King Jehoiachin's exile to Babylon (ca 594/593 BCE) the hand of the Lord fell upon the prophet Ezekiel, and Ezekiel beheld a form that resembled a man. "Below what appeared to be his waist was fire, and above his waist was something like the appearance of brightness, like gleaming metal" (Ezek 8:2). In vision, this figure brought Ezekiel to Jerusalem. "And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision that [Ezekiel] saw in the valley" (v. 4).

In chapter one, Ezekiel describes *the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord [YHWH]*, the expression used for the One who spoke to Ezekiel, saying that He was sending Ezekiel to the people of Israel to say, "Thus says the Lord [*Adonai*] God [YHWH]" (Ezek 2:4) ... it was the Spokesman or the *Logos* for the Lord God whom Ezekiel identifies as *the glory of the Lord*, this One Himself like the Most High. It was this One whom Ezekiel saw leave the temple after ordering that Jerusalem be purged of evildoers, beginning with the sanctuary (9:6); for the guilt of the house of Israel and the house of Judah was exceedingly great (9:9), the land full of blood and the city full of injustice and fit only for fire, the fate of Jerusalem seven years later (586 BCE).

When in Scripture is *the glory of the Lord* (i.e., *Yah*) seen returning to Jerusalem?

Cyrus, King of Persia and of Babylon, proclaimed, "The Lord [YHWH], the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah" (Ezra 1:2). Cyrus commands that the Hebrew captives in Babylon build this house for him [Cyrus], that those captives who go be

assisted by his neighbors with silver and gold, with goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings. Cyrus was limiting how much the royal treasury would have to put out to build a house for the Lord. He intended to use voluntarily conscripted labor and the wealth of the captives themselves. To this he would add the vessels of the house of the Lord that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away (v. 7).

Scripture records, “And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, all these [Nebuchadnezzar] brought to Babylon. And they [the Chaldeans] burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its palaces with fire and destroyed all its precious vessels” (2 Chron 36:18–19).

Earlier, Nebuchadnezzar had come against Jehoiakim and had taken the king to Babylon in chains—and had taken “part of the vessels of the house of the Lord to Babylon and put them in his palace in Babylon” (2 Chron 36:7).

After Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin began to reign ... Jehoiachin was a child of eight years old; so someone serving as his regent got him in trouble with Nebuchadnezzar, who “sent and brought him to Babylon, with the precious vessels of the house of the Lord” (2 Chron 26:10).

Thus, when the temple was razed in 586 BCE, fourteen years after Nebuchadnezzar received the Great Sanhedrin in Daphne and said that he wouldn't destroy the temple if Israel delivered Jehoiachin up to him (apparently when Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon after defeating Jehoiakim someone said to the king that *a dog brings forth no good progeny* and the king realized his political mistake and had Jehoiachin brought to Babylon), the temple was empty:

And the pillars of bronze that were in the house of the Lord, and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of the Lord, the Chaldeans broke in pieces and carried the bronze to Babylon. And they took away the pots and the shovels and the snuffers and the dishes for incense and all the vessels of bronze used in the temple service, the fire pans also and the bowls. What was of gold the captain of the guard took away as gold, and what was of silver, as silver. As for the two pillars, the one sea, and the stands that Solomon had made for the house of the Lord, the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight. The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and on it was a capital of bronze. The height of the capital was three cubits. A latticework and pomegranates, all of bronze, were all around the capital. And the second pillar had the same, with the latticework. (2 Kings 25:13–17)

*What was gold* was taken away as gold, suggesting that gold pieces were melted and carted to Babylon as ingots; so if the Ark of the Covenant, overlaid with pure gold inside and out with a molding of gold around it (Ex 37:2) and the gold cherubim and gold mercy seat and gold furnishing, still existed when Nebuzaradan, captain of Nebuchadnezzar's bodyguard entered Jerusalem, the gold would have been melted, meaning that the Ark would have been burnt ... some speculate that the Ark was hidden, but theologically, the Ark represented Israel in covenant with the Lord. When the Lord delivered Israel into the hand of the Chaldeans, the Lord delivered Israel into “death” through separation from the Lord so the nation was no more a nation. The history of Israel would have Jerusalem only briefly again a free city under the Maccabees. The city was a vassal state of the kings of Persia, the first king of Greece, the Ptolemaic Empire

then the Seleucid Empire before fighting for its independence, followed almost immediately by inviting Rome in as its protector and Lord.

Regardless of what actually happened to the Ark of the Covenant, the Holy of holies in the Second Temple was missing the Ark as well as the Urim and Thummim [האורים והתומים], thus disclosing the absence of God's presence in this Second Temple, ordered built by the King of Persia.

Has anyone ever asked why Israel played *pretend* with the Lord all of those decades (between 516 BCE and 70 CE) when the high priest entered the Holy of holies on *Yom Kipporim* to make atonement for himself, the temple and altar, and for Israel when there was no Ark of the Covenant and no Mercy Seat in the Holy of holies ... the high priest, after bathing and putting on the holy linen coat and undergarment, was to take some of the blood of the bull that was a sin offering for himself and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy seat on the east side, and sprinkle some of it in front of the mercy seat seven times (Lev 16:14). He was then to take some of the blood of the goat killed on the altar and sprinkle it over the Mercy Seat and in front of the Mercy Seat (v. 15). But the only atonement the high priest could really make was to read the sins of Israel over the head of the Azazel goat—and the Azazel goat represented Christ Jesus bearing the sins of Israel in the heavenly realm, with this “bearing” the reality of Grace.

Tradition has it that when the Sanhedrin delivered Jehoiachin to Nebuchadnezzar, Jehoiachin went upon the roof of the temple and looking upward, held up the temple keys, and said, *Since you no longer consider us worthy to be your ministers, take the keys you have entrusted to us until now.* And a fiery hand appeared and took the keys. ... There are other versions of the legend of the keys, but regardless of what happened, the *glory of the Lord* left the temple to not return again to a temple of stone until Jesus of Nazareth entered Herod's temple six months (half of one day) into His ministry — when Jesus entered as a twelve year old, He identified the temple as His Father's house, His Father then being the *Logos* [ὁ λόγος] who was God [ὁ θεός] and who was with the God [τὸν θεόν] in the beginning (John 1:1). It was this *Logos* who entered His creation (John 1:3) as His only Son (John 3:16) to become the Firstborn Son of the Father when a second breath of life [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] descended upon Him as a dove (Matt 3:16–17). After receiving a second breath of life, His Father's house (John 14:2) is not a building of lifeless stone, but a building that has many stayings (as in a legal *stay*), many adoptions, many younger siblings to Christ Jesus; His Father's house is “God,” the Anglicized version of the Greek linguistic icon, θεός, making representing His Father's house with the icon “God” a better representation of deity than is the Hebrew icon, *Elohim*—אלהים, for *Elohim* is the regular plural of *Eloah* whereas “God” is inherently singular; for there is only one house, the Father's house, and the Father, the Son, and all future sons will be residents of this one house, identified as “God.” No one who is not “one” with the Father and the Son (John 17:21–23) will be in this one house; thus the person who is not a fractal image of Christ Jesus will in no way enter the kingdom of the heavens.

When Jesus entered the temple (John 2:14), the *glory of the Lord* returned to the temple: in Jesus' personage was the Ark of the Covenant, the Mercy Seat, and the Urim and Thummim — but when Jesus entered the temple, it was as if the temple had entered itself ... the zeal with which Jesus drove out the merchants and the moneychangers is the same zeal Israel should have had for putting leavening out of all of its dwellings, and the same zeal disciples should have for putting sin out of their lives.

With pedagogical redundancy, let it be again said: there is a typological juxtaposition that those who seek biblical literalism cannot comprehend, for when the Jews asked Jesus for what sign He was showing them by driving out the moneychangers—they knew that prophets tended toward bizarre behavior when making statements from the Lord, but they couldn't attach meaning to Jesus' actions—Jesus said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19), a statement that made no sense to temple officials who countered, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days” (v. 20). John adds, “But he was speaking about the temple of his body” (v. 21). So disciples have John's testimony that Jesus was assigning a differing linguistic object [meaning] to the word “temple” than were the temple officials. But the differing assignment of meaning runs deeper than Jesus merely referring to His body, for the officials obviously understood that Jesus was referring to the stone building, Herod's temple that had been 46 years in the making and would be experiencing its jubilee year when Jesus was crucified.

Jesus saying that He would rebuild the temple in three days made such an impression on the Jews who heard Him that three years later, when accused of wrongdoing, the only charge made against Jesus that wasn't obviously false was made by two who testified, “This man said, “I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days”” (Matt 26:61). Clearly the impression left by Jesus saying, *Destroy this temple*, was that He would destroy Herod's temple, that He would cast down the stones of Herod's temple until not one stone was left atop another (Matt 24:2). And certainly the miracles Jesus had done would suggest that He could literally destroy Herod's temple by causing the stones to be cast down.

Endtime disciples are quick to point out that not all of the stones of Herod's temple were cast down, with the Wailing Wall as proof, but the base size of Herod's temple doesn't match the foundation in Jerusalem today, suggesting that the foundation belongs to a structure Simon Bar-Kochba began. Regardless of whose temple's base is in Jerusalem, Jesus did not destroy a stone building, nor did the Jews in 31 CE.

Jesus destroyed the temple by giving life to the temple, just as the Jesus will defeat Death, the fourth horseman, by causing the two witnesses to live again. “Destroy” doesn't necessarily mean to demolish. Deconstructing metaphors destroys them while enlarging them and making them live. But this is something no biblical literalists is yet able to understand.

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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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