

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and commentary are more extensive for this week and next than will be usual; for the following will most likely be new and unfamiliar observations. The concept behind this Sabbath's selection is *discipleship, predestination continued*.

Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of April 15, 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.

In this third Sabbath reading addressing the unfolding understanding of predestination—an understanding that is not an intentional synthesis of Calvin's and Augustine's positions, but an understanding that without consulting either seems to have elements of both—we will look at Jesus' parables as prophetic Scripture that must be fulfilled, just as Jesus fulfilled prophecies about Himself, and as Judas' betrayal fulfilled Scripture about thirty pieces of silver.

If the Father gave Judas to Jesus as a disciple for the expressed purpose of Judas betraying Jesus—this is how Scripture consistently positions Judas Iscariot—then Satan entering Judas on the night of betrayal, not before, forms the lively shadow of endtime betrayal during the long spiritual night of watching that began at Calvary...for disciples, there are two Passover ceremonies as there is a first and second Passover. The first of these ceremonies is the taking of the sacraments of bread and wine on the night Jesus was betrayed: the dark, prior-to-midnight portion of the 14th of the first month.

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The person conducting the service should read or assign to be read 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verses 17 through 26; followed by John chapter 19, verses 31 through 42; followed by Exodus chapter 12, verses 1 through 6.

Commentary: The Passover lamb was selected on the 10th of the first month. Jesus entered Jerusalem on the 10th: counting backwards from the High Sabbath being on the 15th, from John chapter 12, verses 1 and 12 (coupled with John 19:31), the High Sabbath commonly called the Passover is on the 15th. One day before is the Preparation Day when the lamb is slain, the 14th. Two days before is the 13th; three days, the 12th; four days, the 11th; five days, the 10th; six days before, the 9th, when Jesus went to where Lazarus was. And Jesus was slain on the 14th as the selected Passover Lamb for the household of God, a Lamb appropriate to the size of this household. So of necessity, the Passover meal that Jesus ate with His disciples was on the 14th, the night that He was betrayed—not a night marked as a fixed day on the weekly calendar; rather, the night of the Preparation Day, which varies as to week day, but is always the 14th day of the first month of the sacred year...the Palm Sunday/Good Friday/Easter Sunday tradition is contrary to Scripture, and should be abandoned by disciples faithful to Christ Jesus. Jesus gave only one sign of who He was (Matt 12:38-40), the sign of Jonah, who was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish. Using Scripture to establish the timeline for the week Jesus

was crucified, Jesus entered Jerusalem on the Sabbath, the 10th of the first month; was slain on Wednesday, the 14th; was in the grave at sundown that day, and remained in the grave Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, the Sabbath; and was resurrected before dawn Sunday morning, so that Mary found the tomb empty when it was still dark. And from this juxtaposition of the High Sabbath on Thursday followed by a common day, then the weekly Sabbath, followed by the Wave Sheaf Offering [using how the Sadducees reckoned Scripture] Sunday morning, the Roman calendar year of His death will be 30 or 31 CE, with other evidence making the better case for 31 CE.

As the selected Lamb of God, Jesus was slain as the paschal lamb for the spiritually circumcised nation of Israel, a royal priesthood, the holy nation of God, which was not then a people (1 Pet 2:9-10), but would have to be born of spirit after the last Eve was created of His Spirit in a manner analogous to how the first Eve was flesh & bone of the first Adam. Thus, as physically circumcised Israel would roast and eat the physical paschal lambs slain on the Preparation Day, this roasting and eating initially occurring in Egypt during the long night of watching that would see death angels pass through Egypt, slaying all firstborns not covered by the blood of a paschal lamb, the spiritually circumcised nation of Israel has been roasting Christ Jesus with its sins, and eating the Lamb through taking the sacraments on the night Jesus was betrayed, this roasting and eating occurring during the long spiritual night that began at Calvary. One spiritual night. Two millennia long. Dawn will see the Lamb of God fighting as on a day of battle (Zech 14:3-4), then leading a flock that has His name and His Father's name written on their foreheads (Rev 14:1-5).

All of humankind presently awaits the midnight hour—the darkness is then farthest from the light—when men will again be given as the ransom for the liberation of Israel (Isa 43:3-4). Only liberation will not be of a physical nation from physical bondage to a physical Pharaoh in the physical land of Egypt. Rather, liberation will be of the spiritually circumcised nation from spiritual bondage to sin and death. And the spiritual king of Babylon will come after this freed nation as Pharaoh trapped Israel against the Red Sea [Sea of Reeds]. But Babylon will be broken as Egypt was broken following the passing of the death angel, followed by the sea swallowing Pharaoh's army...the three days journey that Moses asked of Pharaoh corresponds to the three days Jesus was in the grave, and the first three years of the seven endtime years of tribulation.

Humankind has entered into the endtime years of tribulation, during which the spiritual nation of Israel is to live without sin, or be cutoff from God. Grace in the form of the mantle of Christ Jesus' righteousness has been given to cover this spiritual nation in the same way that sin was not reckoned against the physical nation until the giving of the Law (Rom 5:12-14). Empowerment by the Holy Spirit corresponds exactly to the giving of the Law from atop Sinai—sin will be reckoned against the spiritual nation when this nation is liberated from bondage to sin and death through being filled with the divine Breath of God. The mantle of Grace will be laid aside to reveal the Son of Man (Luke 17:30), the Body of whom is the Church. And this garment of Christ's righteousness will cause the death angels to pass over Israelites under the blood of the sacrificed Lamb of God. Empowerment comes after liberation as the giving of the Law came after Israel crossed the Red Sea [baptism] and journeyed a ways into the Wilderness of Sin.

Bread and wine, fruits of the ground, becomes the body and blood of the Lamb of God on only one night a year: the night Jesus was betrayed. On every other night, they

are Cain's offering—and Cain would have been accepted by God if he had done well (Gen 4:7)—but sin lurked at his door as sin lurks in firstborn disciples that take the sacraments whenever and however they (not God) choose.

Therefore, for disciples, two Passovers exist: the first is on the Preparation day, on the night Jesus was betrayed, and this Passover meal consists of taking the sacraments. The second Passover is spiritual, and disciples are **now** in the middle of eating this meal as they wait for liberation, which will come with empowerment by the Holy Spirit following the giving of men for the ransom of spiritual Israel. This meal has begun either with or without spiritual Israelites covering the doorposts and lintels of their fleshy dwellings with the blood of the Lamb—those who have not covered the entrances into their fleshy tents with the blood of the Lamb (i.e., those who did not drink of the cup on the night Jesus was betrayed) will be as Egyptians were, or as spiritual Babylonians will be. There will be a great cry throughout the world, and uncovered Israelites will cry with their Babylonian neighbors.

Of the seven High Sabbaths, only one has a second occurrence.

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The reader should now read Numbers chapter 9, verses 1 through 14.

Commentary: This passage in Numbers is more ambiguously worded than are the instructions given in Exodus chapter 12, but the passage refers back to the appointed time for keeping the Passover so traditionally, the second Passover has been kept by natural Israel on the dark portion [following twilight] of the 15th of the second month. But as with when to observe the Wave Sheaf Offering, disagreement allows interpretation, with the practices of Jesus establishing the matter. Therefore, *the Philadelphia Church* observes the second Passover on the 14th, with no following night observance commemorating Israel leaving Egypt.

Today, Jesus is that nobleman of the parable of the pounds who is on a journey to a far land—He is on a long journey, and He has Scriptural justification for keeping the second Passover on the 14th/15th of the second month. But the second Passover that He will keep (when He again drinks of this fruit of the vine — Matt 26:29) will be in the kingdom of God. So Jesus will not eat the Passover meal that disciples **now** spiritually eat while awaiting liberation. He is the Lamb being eaten, and He will not devour His own body and blood. Instead, when this spiritual week of Unleavened Bread ends with His return as the Messiah, Jesus, will, in the second month of the second year, drink new wine at the second Passover.

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The reader should now read Matthew chapter 13.

Commentary: In the parable of the sower of seeds (*vv.* 3-9), and in its explanation (*vv.* 18-23), disciples are the seeds sown—and to fulfill Scripture (that is, for this descriptive [as opposed to being prescriptive] parable to be valid), some disciples must necessarily be seed that is sown on the path, sown on rocky soil, sown among the thorny weeds, and sown on good ground. As a description of the state of disciples, no disciple must fail, but rather, will fail because of the location [physical geography forms the visible shadow of mental typography] in which the disciple was sown.

If the All Mighty is all knowing, why would He sow seed on unsuitable soil? Why not wait to draw the person? Why not give the person spiritual life in the great White Throne Judgment, instead of in this present evil world?

Now the essence of predestination becomes visible: if failure were the prescriptive condition in which some seed was sown, then the disciple sown on rocky ground would be predetermined to fail, and would be unable to escape the second death. The disciple would be born of Spirit for the specific purpose of burning in the lake of fire.

But even as a descriptive state, the disciple sown on rocky soil will not escape the second death.

Predetermination and predestination appear the same for the disciple sown on rocky soil, but not so for the disciple sown on good soil, for this disciple will bring forth a hundredfold, or a sixty-fold or a thirty-fold increase, depending upon diligence and talent.

Backing up to the disciple sown on rocky ground, Jesus said that the rocky ground produced no root so that tribulation or persecution causes the disciple to fall away. This having no root within the disciple will be known beforehand, just as Esau's actions were apparently known beforehand. The disciple is as Esau was, and Esau would have been physically circumcised, but not of Jacob's seed. The promises made to Abraham carry through to Isaac, not Ishmael, and to Jacob, not Esau—in both cases, the promises go to the younger rather than the older son. So the order in which the sowing occurs sets up a similar condition:

Satan snatching away seed sown in the path :: 100x increase on good soil

No root in rocky ground :: 60x increase on good soil

Choked by thorns :: 30x increase on good soil.

Therefore, two mental topographies are revealed, one of which is labeled good soil—and the implication of “good” soil is that the landscape is of the Father, for only the Father is good (Luke 18:19). By extension, the disciple who hears Jesus' words and believes Him who sent Jesus does not come under judgment, but passes from death to life (John 5:24). So *good soil* is hearing and believing God, this believing not a passive act but the actual application of the commandments of God, which will cause the disciple to live as a spiritual Judean—for Jesus, Himself, would not identify Himself as good even though He was sinless. Growing from good soil, now, will see the disciple's thoughts and desires rooted in the Father, with the disciple's actions reflecting Christ Jesus...a disciple cannot practice lawlessness and be rooted in good soil. And if not rooted in good soil, the disciple will ultimately rebel against God.

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In the parable of the weeds, the good soil of God's field—the kingdom of heaven—is planted with good seed, but while the Master's servants were sleeping, the Adversary sowed weed seeds throughout this field...these weeds were not planted on a path, or on rocky soil, or among the briars. No, they were planted where they could do the most damage to the Master's crop, for a tare looks a little like wheat, grows faster than wheat, shades the wheat and robs the wheat of moisture, while producing worthless seed. And to fulfill Scripture, tares must be planted by the Adversary in the good soil that should bring forth 30x, or 60x, or 100x increase.

Whether given by the Father to Jesus as Judas Iscariot was or coming strictly from Satan, the tares that are planted in the Church don't live where trials are—they are the trial that grows within the law-abiding mindset of genuine disciples. They are not the easily identified teachers of iniquity who would have infant sons of God attempt to enter God's rest on the following day. Instead, they are Sabbatarian cultmeisters and spiritual Pharisees and physically-minded web moderators, who would have disciples reading the

Jerusalem Post instead of Scripture; who would have disciples quibbling about calendar issues, about the name of Jesus, about whether a duck is a “clean” bird. The quibbles are many: should disciples keep the Passover only on the 15th as natural Israel did? Should disciples go out to eat on the Sabbath? Must disciples tithe when the temple no longer exists? And these tares dominate the so-called independent Sabbatarian church to such an extent that these independents even look like a hatful of weed seeds.

The Father has allowed the tares to grow with the wheat until the harvest—one researcher at Utah State counted the number of seeds on stalks of red-rooted pigweed. A stalk could have as many 278,000 seeds. It’s no wonder that weeds outnumber genuine disciples even on the fertile fields of the Master.

But the tares will be gathered and burned before the wheat is harvested, with their binding to occur during the seven endtime years of tribulation. And perhaps tares have no choice about what they do, for they are not of the crop the Father planted by having drawn disciples from the world. These tares do not have the Spirit of God even though they pretend to be more righteous than any stalk of wheat. Let them pretend. Let them have their chat groups, and their disciple recovery packets, and their diminutive cult followings. Salvation remains ahead of them, but they won’t be able to take advantage of being born anew, for they have [or Satan has] corrupted their minds to such an extent that they cannot repent. They have gotten too close to the truth to ever recognize their errant ways.

Those disciples planted within the laws of God—few are these disciples—are foreknown and predestined to glory...God has planted seeds where He knew they could not grow as cover to protect the seed sown in His fields. If He will again give the lives of men as ransom for the liberation of His spiritual nation, He certainly could scatter seeds where the Adversity is sure to find them. So we will here leave this subject for another week.

And if you know to keep the laws of God, you best do so while you can for it might be that you can amend the soil in which you are planted to the extent that it becomes good ground, where we will go next time.

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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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