

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 *the seventy weeks prophecy*.

## **Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of April 22, 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 service should read or assign to be read Haggai chapter 1, verses 1 through 11; followed by Ezra chapters 3 through 6.*

**Commentary:** Typology opens formerly sealed Scriptural passages and prophecies, and typological exegesis holds that the refugees of natural Israel who returned from Babylonia to rebuild the house of God in present-day Jerusalem [or the Jerusalem below — from Gal 4:25-26] form the visible shadow of the mostly invisible remnant of the Church that returned from spiritual Babylon to rebuild the house of God in the Jerusalem above. Typological exegesis further holds that the seventy weeks prophecy given to Daniel moves from the principle of a week representing seven calendar years, or 70 weeks representing 490 years (69 weeks representing 483 years) to the seventieth week representing breaking midweek from physical to spiritual days, thereby making the fourth day a “spiritual day,” and making one long spiritual night beginning midweek, a night that lasts for two millennia—that lasts from the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan in the Roman year 31 CE until halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation, with the giving of lives for the ransom of spiritually circumcised Israel denoting the midnight hour of this long night, and the beginning of the seven endtime years.

So that the importance of this concept is not overlooked: Jesus of Nazareth is the light of men (John 1:4), and this light shone out of darkness (2 Co 4:6 & Gen 1:3). The first day of the Genesis one creation account began with the Holy Spirit hovering over the world and ends at Calvary, when the light of men died and was no longer on earth. Thus, the darkness of the second day began between the evenings of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan in the calendar year 31 CE, and lasted three earth days and three nights. But before the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, Jesus appeared to ten of His disciples, breathed on these ten, and said, *Receive the Holy Spirit* (John 20:22), thereby beginning the division of the waters of humanity between those born from above and those not yet so born of Spirit. And for 40 days, Jesus was with His disciples—the “light” portion of the second day.

A “day” begins with darkness; a spiritual day begins with darkness (i.e., the absence of the light of men) and continues through the return of the light, and

then ends when darkness returns to begin the next day. Thus, the seventh day of the spiritual creation week is without end, for darkness never returns. The light never ends, for once the new heavens and the new earth arrive the throne of the Father arrives. There will be no more darkness ever.

In reference to the 70 weeks prophecy, the dark portion of one spiritual day began when Joseph and Nicodemus placed Jesus in the garden tomb, for the actual practice of the Pharisees was to slaughter Passover lambs at three o'clock, halfway between noon and six. This practice was an interpretation of Moses' instructions, and perhaps not the best interpretation. Thus, when Joseph and Nicodemus placed Jesus in the tomb was the actual "at even" when the Passover lambs probably should have been slaughtered. Therefore, the seventieth week of the prophecy given Daniel experiences a midweek (Jesus' earthly ministry was three and half years in length) break that sees the counting of the week resume when the light of men returns not as the Messiah, but as the Lamb of God that leads the 144,000 (Rev 14:1-5) for another three and a half years, the last half of the seventieth week. However, these three and a half years are also the last half of the seven calendar years of tribulation that correspond to the seven days of Unleavened Bread when all of Israel was to live without leavening, and spiritually without sin.

The third day of the spiritual creation week began with Jesus' Ascension, when His disciples saw Him no more (Acts 1:9-11). This "dark" portion of the third day will end when Jesus stands on the Mount of Olives to fight as on a day of battle (Zech 14:3-4), then leads "the woman," the 144,000 from twelve tribes, in the wilderness (Rev 12:14-16)...it is the split Mount of Olives that will swallow the flood; this split mountain is the stone cut without human hands that crushes the feet of the image Nebuchadnezzar saw. And the "light" portion of this third day of creation ends when Jesus returns to the heavenly realm to gather those angels who come with Him when He returns as the Messiah

Two "counts" overlap: Jesus as the Passover Lamb of God is slain on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan of the Roman year 31 CE. His death begins the endtime years of tribulation as it does the spiritual reality of the seven days of Unleavened Bread. Yes, the endtime years have begun, but they have not advanced very far for the midnight hour of the first night hasn't yet arrived—the Apostle Paul writes, concerning typology and the exodus of natural Israel from Egypt, "Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come" (1 Co 10:11)...Paul is not mistaken although he seems to be. Paul seems to be wrong about the end of the age coming upon him; from other passages in his epistles, Paul apparently believed that Jesus would return in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century, that either he or some with him would live to see Jesus' return. Paul didn't understand that the darkness would last two millennia. So Paul was correct that the end of the age was upon him, and would be upon every disciple since Paul wrote. But the end of the age begins with a spiritual day that is marked by the coming and going of the **light of men**, Christ Jesus, and not the sun or moon. And until the **light of men** returns, humankind lives through one long spiritual night of watching, foreshadowed by the night of watching that natural Israel experienced in Egypt, an example written down for us so that disciples would know that the death angel

will again pass over the land, slaying firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God.

Again, the visible shadow of the night that began at Calvary was the long night of watching natural Israel experienced in Egypt prior to that nation's liberation from physical bondage to Pharaoh. The first three years of the seven endtime years corresponds to the three days and three nights that Jesus was in the grave, and to the midnight to dawn hours of the long spiritual night of watching that began at Calvary. The half year corresponds to the dark to dawn period of the 18<sup>th</sup> of Nisan of the Roman calendar year 31 CE. Little is known about what Jesus was doing during these twelve or so hours, for Jesus was gone from the tomb before dawn. The three day, three night period would have been completed at sundown between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Only what Peter writes possibly addresses these hours. So once more, the first half of the Tribulation correspond to the spiritual hours between midnight and dawn of the long night of watching the natural nation of Israel experienced in Egypt once the death angel passed throughout the land.

The seventy week prophecy that is physically fulfilled to the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> week will also have a spiritual fulfillment that pertains to the spiritually circumcised nation of Israel. Thus, typological exegesis holds that the remnant of spiritually circumcised Israel historically labeled as Anabaptists left spiritual Babylon in the early decades of the 16<sup>th</sup>-Century [ca 1523-27] to begin a mental or spiritual journey to the Jerusalem above, where the house of God would be rebuilt, meaning that this Anabaptist remnant would return to the Apostolic era of the Church, recover the practices of the Jesus and His disciples, and build a "house" on these 1<sup>st</sup>-Century practices and teachings. Therefore, typological exegesis has 21<sup>st</sup>-Century disciples living as spiritual Judeans, which means that they will keep the commandments and the Sabbaths of God—means that disciples are not separated from the world by physical circumcision as was natural Israel, but by keeping the commandments (1 Co 7:19), for neither circumcision or uncircumcision has meaning. Only keeping the commandments, including the Sabbath commandment, has meaning. And for disciples (spiritual Israelites), keeping the commandments doesn't address what hands and bodies do as if disciples were attempting to please men, but what the desires of the heart and the thoughts of the mind are; for disciples are not under an external law inscribed on two tablets of stone. Rather, they are under the laws of God written on hearts and minds. An inner law inscribed on fleshy tablets—this inner law cleanses the inside of the cup, and when the inside is clean, the whole cup will be clean for the hands and body will do the will of the heart and mind. Disciples will walk as Jesus walked, and Jesus walked as a Judean, holy to God.

But the natural remnant of Israel that returned from Babylonia to present-day Jerusalem left off work on the house of God to build for themselves houses when commanded to stop working for God by local authorities...only the prodding of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah got the work going again. But before work was resumed, the remnant sowed much seed, but harvested little (Hag 1:6). The remnant ate, but never had enough; drank, but never had its fill; clothed itself, but was cold; earned wages that the remnant put in bags with holes. And if that

isn't an apt description of the work of the Sabbatarian churches, a better one hasn't been written.

The journey of the Anabaptist remnant was first a physical flight for their lives as Protestant Reformers attempted to exterminate them, but it was their spiritual journey that was of importance. However, the wound the serpent's seed inflicted on the heel of the body of Christ caused early Anabaptists to neither understand spiritual birth, nor the nature of the godhead and its relationships. Thus, generations passed as this remnant of spiritual Israel mentally trekked toward Judea, often, though, fearful of entering God's rest; so most of this remnant continued to cling to the day when spiritual Babylon rests. But a remnant of this remnant crossed the spiritual river Jordan and began observing the weekly Sabbath, the diminutive form of God's rest (Heb 4:1-10).

If the seventy weeks prophecy applies to the Anabaptist remnant that left spiritual Babylon—the *Philadelphia Church's* contention is that it does—then the rebuilding of the temple was commissioned nearly five centuries ago. Humankind truly lives in the time of the end [i.e., the end of this era], and the beginning of the seven endtime years of tribulation is not far in the future...the laying of the spiritual foundations of the house of God, though, took healing the wound to the heel of the Seed, for these foundations rest upon understanding that spiritual birth is receipt of actual life in the heavenly realm through the divine Breath of God [*Pneuma 'Agion*], and that this life is given when a person is drawn from the world by the Father; that since the Holy Spirit was given to Cornelius and his household, baptism follows receipt of the Holy Spirit and does not precede it; that baptism of an infant spiritual son of God (the chronological age of the tent of flesh does not reflect the age of the spiritual son of God) is the reality foreshadowed by the physical circumcision of a Hebrew infant at eight days of age. Therefore, laying the spiritual foundation of the house of God in the Jerusalem above was much delayed by generations of personal home building.

Whereas many disciples should be engaged in rebuilding the house of God in the Jerusalem above, only a few disciples show up to do any work. Very few. Too few. The harvest is great, but where are the laborers? Are they not busily debating about trim details: *Is it the dark of the moon, or the crescent? What about set asides? Is the calendar really an oracle of God trusted to the Jews?* The list is seemingly endless, so that when someone comes to a Sabbatarian fellowship for the first time, the person is spiritually slain with *do this, but not that*. Too many Sabbatarians seem like a flock of hens seeing an open wound—within minutes, a little blood becomes a hemorrhaging wound, and the newcomer returns to his or her Sunday fellowship that is short on truth, but longer on love.

Great shame has come upon all Sabbatarian Christians, even to those in dominant denominations.

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*The reader should now read Haggai chapter 1, verses 12 through 14.*

**Commentary:** When the remnant of natural Israel that returned from Babylon returned to work on the house of God, the remnant prospered; the work was completed. It couldn't be stopped by letters to the Persian king.

The house of God in the Jerusalem above wasn't rebuilt in the 20<sup>th</sup>-Century by a radio evangelist, even though many Sabbatarians seem to believe that myth (the

myth of this evangelist being God's essential endtime man began with what the evangelist taught about himself). This house for God isn't fully built yet although much work has been accomplished since 2002—and even when it is completed, the walls of Jerusalem above will need built and the holy city will need repopulated.

Today, Sabbatarian tares overshadow the sparse stalks of grain, starved for finances, starved for light...if a disciple will not hear the voice of Jesus the disciple will wither and die, leaving only tares where good seed was sown in good soil. And as was the case with the remnant of natural Israel that returned to Babylon, so it has been with the Sabbatarian churches of God: spiritually circumcised Israel has spiritually married foreign wives, spiritually buys and sells on the Sabbath, and has produced a generation of spiritual Pharisees.

What is to be done?

What will be done is that the Father and Son will deliver the saints into the hand of the man of perdition for the first half of the seven endtime years of the tribulation (Dan 7:25), and this lawless one will slay, or order slain those who keep the commandments of God, both Jew and Christian.

A remnant of the remnant of the remnant that left spiritual Babylon will physically escape death (Rev 12:17), but most Sabbatarians will go to their graves in faith, or will rebel against God and experience the second death when judgments are revealed.

If death during the first years of the Tribulation is the fate of most Sabbatarians, why would a born of Spirit son of God now help to rebuild the house of God when by not helping, the work is delayed as is the beginning of the Tribulation? The disciple can, for his or her natural lifetime, live comfortably in the house the disciple built for him or herself. And this is what has been occurring.

The work will get done regardless of who does or doesn't help.

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*The reader should now read Zechariah chapter 4.*

**Commentary:** Christ Jesus is the reality of the Zerubbabel who will finish the work, but it will be through one or many human beings that Christ completes a work of Spirit. This work won't be completed by television might, or with financial power. It won't appear as a mighty work done in the name of the Lord, but it will level mountains before the spiritual capstone is placed atop the rebuilt house for God.

The two olives trees are the two witnesses whose ministry doesn't begin until spiritual Israel is liberated from physical bondage to sin and death. Their ministry doesn't cause the born of Spirit son of God to cover his sins by taking the Passover sacraments on the night Jesus was betrayed; they can do no more than anyone else now in the remnant that left Babylon. But Christ would not have His friends wandering the streets of Memphis when the lives of men are again given as ransom for Israel (Isa 43:3-4): spiritual sons of God can take the sacraments on the second Passover if they were spiritually unclean on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan of this Roman calendar year. So all of the remnant presently working to rebuild the house of God in the Jerusalem above, a city that no one living in Babylon can enter without first mentally journeying into God's rest, invites those spiritually

circumcised Israelites who take the sacraments whenever and however they will, thereby wandering the streets of Memphis and Thebes as drunken sailors, to cleanse themselves from the inside, then take the second Passover.

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

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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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