

The following suggested or possible grouping of Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and limited commentary are, hopefully, obviously thematically related. And the concept behind this High Sabbath's selection is the nature of the Holy Spirit...it is suggested that fellowships have *morning and afternoon services on the High Days*; thus, readings for two services are grouped together.

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Readings for Pentecost

June 19, 2005

Morning Services

The person conducting Pentecost services should open services with two or three hymns, or psalms, followed by an opening prayer acknowledging that two or three (or more) are gathered together in Christ Jesus' name, and inviting the Lord to be with them.

The first passage read should be Leviticus, chapter 23, verses 1 and 2, then verses 9 through 22, followed by Deuteronomy, chapter 16, verses 9 through 12, and 16 and 17, then Exodus, chapter 23, verses 14 through 17.

Commentary: The three seasons or times a year when Israel is to appear before the Lord is Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, the three seasons when there is a harvest of the Lord. Christ Jesus as the first of the firstfruits, as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering, appeared before God and was accepted during Unleavened Bread. He was without sin, leavening representing sin. The firstfruits--the saints who have been drawn and chosen in this age--appear before God as the reality of the Judean early barley harvest. They are represented by, and are the reality of the two loaves, baked with leaven, offered at the Feast of Weeks ("Pentecost" means "fifty," and is usually said to mean "count fifty"). The last great day following Tabernacles represents the reality that is the great White Throne Judgment, when everyone who has drawn breath and was **not** drawn by the Father as one born-from-above out of season will be resurrected, will be born anew or born of Spirit, and will appear before Christ to give an accounting of their lives.

The Philadelphia Church and the Churches of God traditionally take up an offering on the three seasons when all Israel was to appear before God, and not appear empty, but giving as blessed and as able. This offering is primarily the inner self-aware, self-conscience new man or creature, born of Spirit, presenting the body of the old man, or old self before God. Disciples in those fellowships that do not observe the holy days will, in the heavenly realm, appear before God in their prayers on these days. But they appear empty-handed. They appear with nothing, while all who are here today have brought an offering, themselves.

Nevertheless, at this time those who are able are asked to give of their physical blessings, not reluctantly, but cheerfully. The person who gives of necessity might as well keep the offering--no treasure will be laid up in heaven for a reluctant offering, which includes presenting oneself before God.

The person conducting Pentecost services should, at this time, pass a plate or basket as would be appropriate for the size of the gathering. In larger gatherings, the person conducting the services would appoint others to take up the collection.

During the taking up of the offering, special music can be performed. Then following the offering should be a prayer of thanks, followed by a hymn.

The person doing the reading should now read Exodus, chapters 16 through 20.

Commentary: Notice first that Israel left Elim on the 15th of the second month, four weeks after the Passover. Moses had asked Pharaoh to let Israel go three days' journey into the wilderness (Exod 5:3 -- read), with these three days representing the time Jesus would be in the grave before He was resurrected and appeared before the Father as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering. Thus, the counting for the Feasts of Weeks, which had not yet been given, would have begun on or with the fourth day of Unleavened Bread, for Israel left Egypt on the 15th day of the first month (the Passover lamb was slaughtered at even on the 14th, and roasted and eaten during the night portion of the 15th, with the death angel passing throughout Egypt at the midnight hour of the 15th--before or at daybreak, Israel started its journey of three days into the wilderness to worship the Lord).

Pharisees and Rabbinical Judaism begin their counting of weeks from the 15th of the first month, which results in the Feast of Weeks being celebrated on the 6th of the third month. Sadducees and the Churches of God have traditionally started counting from the Wave Sheaf Offering, the Sunday following the weekly Sabbath that occurs within the seven days of Unleavened Bread. This count will result in Pentecost always occurring on a Sunday in the third month, not on a fixed calendar date.

Although the Churches of God have traditionally taught that the Law was given on Pentecost--the logic for the Law being given and for the filling of the disciples with the Holy Spirit on the same day makes a seemingly persuasive argument--Scripture doesn't make such a persuasive claim. If the three days journey marks what will become the Wave Sheaf Offering (the model of Jesus being sacrificed as the Passover Lamb of God between the evenings on the 14th, lying in the grave three days and three nights, then being resurrected and appearing before the Father the morning of the first day of the week), then the count for Pentecost will begin on the 18th of the first month, with the weekly Sabbath being on the 17th. The second week will then begin on the 25th of the first month. Each month will have 29 or 30 days. If the first month has 29 days, then the third week will begin on the 3rd of the

second month; the fourth week will begin on the 10th, the fifth week will begin on the 17th, the day when manna is first given and the same day as when Noah entered the Ark. The sixth week will begin on the 24th of the second month, and the seventh week will begin on 1st or 2nd of the third month, depending upon whether the second month has 30 days [the 1st] or 29 days [the 2nd]. Israel came to the wilderness of Sinai on or about the 1st of the third month. Scripture doesn't indicate that four days passed before Moses went up to God. Rather, Exodus 19:1-3 seems to indicate that Moses went up to God the day Israel arrived, and that all of the events recorded from verse 1 through verse 15 occur on the first day. The law would then be given on the 3rd or 4th day of the third month; the Law would be given mid-week (on a Wednesday or Thursday), fifty days after Israel left Egypt. Therefore, if the Law was given on the Feast of Weeks, the count should begin from when Israel left Egypt. Rabbinical Judaism would have it correct and the Churches of God wrong. However, if any of the events recorded in verses 1 through 15 take longer than a day, then the Law would be spoken near or on the Feast of Weeks, as kept by the Churches of God.

The person reading should now read chapter 24 of Exodus.

Commentary: After Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders saw the Lord (Exod 24:9-10) the day the Law was spoken and the covenant was given--that same day, (v. 15) Moses went up on the mountain halfway (from Exod 24:13 & 32:15, 17), and the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the Lord dwelt on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day the Lord called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud...Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain. Using Rabbinical dating, Moses entered the cloud on or about the 10th day of the third month, as Noah entered the Ark on the 10th day of the second month, and as Israel crossed the Jordan on the 10th day of the first month, as Jesus entered Jerusalem on the 10th of the first month, and as the Passover lamb was selected and penned on the 10th of the first month.

The person reading should now read Exodus, chapter 34, verses 29 through 35, followed by 2 Corinthians chapter 3.

Commentary: Moses entering the cloud to acquire a glory reflecting that of the Lord as the moon reflects the glory of the sun becomes the significant event, not the actual speaking of the Law, which has behind it death, not life. Under the new covenant, the law of God is written on hearts and minds (Jer 31:33 & Heb 8:10). The two tablets of stone that were given to Moses in the cloud foreshadow the writing of the law by God on tablets of flesh--the writing of the law of God on the hearts and minds of called disciples is a euphemistic expression for receiving the Spirit of God. Thus, it isn't hearing the Law that imparts life (what happens when the Law is spoken from atop Mount Sinai), but receiving the Law inwardly from God. It is what happens after a person hears the Law that becomes important, for it is not hearers who are righteous, but doers (Rom 2:13 & Jas 1:22-25). Life comes through receipt of the Spirit, through birth-from-above. The appearance of the glory of the Lord was, atop Sinai, like a

devouring fire. This appearance of fire on top of the mountain foreshadowed the tongues of fire that appear on that day of Pentecost following Calvary. According to *Philadelphia's* understanding of the Seventy Weeks prophecy, one spiritual day began at Calvary and extends to when the day of the Lord begins, halfway through seven, endtime years of tribulation. This day is represented by the six days the glory of the Lord dwelt on Mount Sinai before the Lord called to Moses.

Therefore, Moses entering the cloud on or about the 10th of the third month becomes the event that foreshadows the glorified Jesus baptizing the world in Spirit. This event happens figuratively midweek; i.e., halfway through those seven, endtime years of tribulation. Thus, counting weeks in the manner traditionally used by the Churches of God, Pentecost foreshadows when the greater Church is empowered by the Holy Spirit three and a half years before the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ. It is right that the Law was given midweek, as Christ Jesus was slain midweek, and as the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh in the middle of a spiritual week.

Sin entered the world through Adam, but no sin was reckoned against human beings although all died until the Law was given (Rom 5:12-14 -- read). The Law kills, or rather transgression of the Law kills. But the Spirit gives life. Thus, physically circumcised Israel was in Egypt and in the Wilderness of Sin as spiritually lifeless shadows of Christians under Grace. Sin was not reckoned against them. Sin is not today counted against disciples, but is borne by Christ Jesus, the reality of Grace. (However, the righteousness of hypocrites does not exceed that of the Pharisees; thus, hypocrites will in no way enter the kingdom of heaven -- Matt 5:20.). But following the giving of the Law from atop Mount Sinai, sin is counted against Israel. Likewise, when the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:26-30), the garment of Christ or covering of Grace will be removed. The Son of Man, of which disciples form the Body of Christ, will be revealed at the beginning of seven, endtime years of tribulation. Three and a half years later, when Satan is cast from heaven, when spiritual Babylon falls, when the kingdom of the world becomes the Kingdom of the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh.

The person conducting Pentecost services should, at this time, adjourn services, with a hymn, a prayer, and a blessing on the food (if appropriate). The person should also announce when afternoon services are to commence.

Afternoon Services

At the appropriate time, the person conducting services should resume services with two or three hymns, and a prayer.

The reader should begin afternoon services by reading Acts chapters 1 and 2.

Commentary: Although Peter says what has happened is what was uttered through the prophet Joel, the context isn't the same.

The reader should read from the prophet Joel, chapter 2, verses 28 through 32.

Commentary: On that Pentecost following Calvary, there were no wonders in heaven and on earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun wasn't turned to darkness, and the moon to blood. All of these heavenly signs occur during the Tribulation at the end of this age.

The reader should read Isaiah, chapter 11, followed by Isaiah, chapter 65, verse 25.

Commentary: When the Holy Spirit is poured out upon all flesh at the time of, or just prior to the recovery of Israel a second time, even the nature of the great predators will change. Peace will reign, or will soon reign. Peace did not begin to reign, even among animals, on that day of Pentecost following Calvary. Thus, what occurred was the visible foreshadowing of the baptism of the world in Spirit when the Lord sets His hand to recover Israel a second time.

The reader should read Matthew chapter 3, followed by John, chapter 1, verses 29 through 34.

Commentary: Baptism means literal immersion, or submersion. John baptized with water for the repentance of sin; the Lord baptized with water in the days of Noah. The disciples gathered together on that day of Pentecost were immersed in the visible manifestation of the Holy Spirit in a manner similar to how John baptized with water. The Lord Jesus will baptize the world in Spirit in the same way that He baptized the world in water. Likewise, at the end of the age, when the new heavens and the new earth arrive, He will baptize the world in fire in the same way that He will, then, previously have baptized the world in water and Spirit.

The Greek expression that is translated as the Holy Spirit is *Pneuma 'Agion*, meaning, literally, Breath Holy. The Holy Spirit is, in actuality, the Breath of God; hence, it sounds like wind (Acts 2:2).

The reader should read John, chapter 3, verses 1 through 8, followed by chapter 20, verses 19 through 23.

Commentary: Jesus said the Holy Spirit/Breath was like wind, going where it will. Plus, when Jesus returned after being accepted by the Father, He "breathed" on ten of His disciples and said, *Receive the Holy Breath* (translated as *Spirit*). If another person breathed on you, you would receive that person's breath. If Jesus as a man breathed on you, you would receive His breath. If Jesus as a life-giving spirit breathes on you, you would receive His spiritual breath; hence, the Holy Spirit, which imparts spiritual life in the same way that physical life was imparted into Adam when *Elohim* breathed into his nostrils.

What occurs on this day of Pentecost following Calvary wasn't the disciples receiving the Holy Spirit as is usually taught, for ten of the disciples received the Holy Spirit the evening following the Jesus' acceptance as the Wave Sheaf Offering. Rather, the disciples were "filled," or empowered by the Holy Spirit in a foreshadowing of what will occur at the end of the age.

The reader should read chapter 1 of Luke, noting verses 15, 41, and 67.

Commentary: John the Baptist, Elizabeth his mother, and Zechariah his father--all were filled or empowered by the Holy Spirit.

It is also usually taught that no one had the Holy Spirit "in" them until Pentecost, that the patriarchs and mighty men of old only had the Spirit "with" them. Moses had the Spirit "on" him (Num 11:17). King David had the Holy Spirit (Ps 51:11). But it is, in linguistic reality, trying to attach too much preciseness to English prepositions, which are by custom used sloppily, to argue for *in* or *with*. The physically circumcised Israelite with or without the Holy Spirit dwelling in Judea in a fabric tent formed the visible shadow of the spiritually circumcised son of God, born from above, now dwelling in the tabernacle of flesh of the old man or self. Today, circumcision would be of the tabernacle or tent in which the born-of-Spirit son of God resides, and as such is of no value to this son of God. The physical precedes the spiritual (1 Cor 15:46), and the visible reveals the invisible (Rom 1:20). Physical circumcision preceded spiritual circumcision, which is of the heart and mind, and not of the flesh. Physical circumcision was a usually undetectable marker that separated an Israelite male from all other peoples (except descendants of cousins Ishmael and Esau) until closely examined. Likewise, spiritual circumcision is, unfortunately, a too-often undetectable marker that separates disciples from the world. The physically circumcised Israelite with the Holy Spirit was as visible as are spiritually circumcised disciples who actually live by the word of God.

Too often it is taught that the Holy Spirit was not offered to ancient Israel, that the Holy Spirit first became available on the day of Pentecost following Calvary. Those who teach this do not understand the second covenant.

The reader should read Deuteronomy, chapters 29 through 31.

Commentary: A second covenant between God and Israel, a covenant made in addition to the one confirmed at Mount Sinai, was made at Moab, just before the uncircumcised children of the nation that left Egypt crossed the Jordan River. The essence of this second covenant mediated by Moses was that when Israel had experienced blessings and cursing and was driven into far lands, if the nation would then, when in the far lands and as an act of faith, begin keeping the laws of God, the Lord would bring Israel back to Judea and would give to the nation circumcised hearts and souls/minds [*naphesh* -- the word should be translated as mind]. A circumcised heart and mind is, again, a euphemistic expression for receiving the Spirit of God, which causes the laws of God to be written on

the heart and mind. So, following obedience by faith, receipt of the Holy Spirit was promised to the circumcised nation. One of the better promises added when the mediator of the second covenant became Christ Jesus was receipt of the Holy Spirit prior to obedience. Therefore, it is not true that the Holy Spirit was not offered to Old Testament Israel. It was offered following demonstrated obedience by faith.

What occurred on that Pentecost following Calvary was foreshadowing of what will happen when spiritually circumcised Israelis empowered by the Holy Spirit, and when the Holy Spirit is poured out upon all flesh. The [first event occurs at the beginning of the seven, endtime years of tribulation](#); the second event to occur in the middle of these endtime years.

Christ will return in the spring of the year...in the fall of the year [in the northern hemisphere] Satan will be cast from heaven and will come claiming to be the returned Christ 1260 days before the Messiah comes in power. During these last forty-two months, the Holy Spirit will have been poured out upon all flesh. Every human being will have been empowered by God to resist Satan. [All who endure to the end shall be saved](#), the message that must be proclaimed to the world as a witness to all nations before these last 1260 days begin. Death, the fourth horseman of the Apocalypse, will be dealt a mortal wound when Babylon falls. With exceptions (Rev 13:10 & 14:13), all who die during this second half of the Tribulation will have taken the mark of Death, [the mark of the beast](#), upon themselves. For what happened to the Apostles when filled with the Spirit on that day of Pentecost following Calvary will happen to all human beings when baptized in the Spirit halfway through the seven, endtime years. To then sin, or to take the mark of the beast will be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, and will not be forgiven.

The person conducting Pentecost services should, at this time, adjourn services, with one or two hymns, and a closing prayer.

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