

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and commentary are offered as openings into dialogue about the subject or concept. And the concept behind this Sabbath's selection remains *natural disasters*.

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## Weekly Readings

For the Sabbath of September 24, 2005

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

*The person conducting the services should read or assign to be read Luke chapter 13, verses 1 through 5.*

**Commentary:** As hurricane *Rita* hits the Texas coast about this Sabbath day, tens of thousands have fled to higher ground. They will escape the brunt of the hurricane's ravaging. So what should be said of the victims of hurricane *Katrina*? Were they worse sinners than the many Texans who will escape the fury of *Rita*? Were they any different than the eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell? Or different from the Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices?

*The reader should now read Luke chapter 12, verses 35 through 48.*

**Commentary:** Disciples are still living—and have been living—through one long spiritual night that began at Calvary when the Lamb of God was sacrificed as the acceptable sin offering for all of humanity. Daybreak will not come until the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ (Rev 11:15 & Dan 7:9-14). The only light now in the world, like stars that shine in night skies, are disciples who have kept their lamps burning in anticipation of their Master's return.

In the spiritual creation account foreshadowed by the physical creation that occurred in six days (Exod 31:17), humanity lives through the second day, not the sixth day as many have assumed. Of course, these days are not time-linked, so they are not necessarily of the same length in earth chronology. The Apostle Peter said that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day (2 Pet 3:8), but Peter did not say that one day was a thousand years long. The point Peter made was that great lengths of time according to human reckoning were as days with the Lord, who now resides in the timeless heavenly realm. Human beings, with life spans shorter than trees, are anxious about when events, especially the return of Christ Jesus, will happen. God keeps His own schedule without humanity's input. At best, disciples can do no more than the circumcised nation of Israel did when in Egyptian bondage: disciples can pray for liberation and deliverance from sin as they

go about their daily business of making bricks for a spiritual Pharaoh, the king of Babylon (Isa 14:4-21).

Humanity is presently being separated by who is born-from-above (or is of heaven) from who is not. An expanse exists between *the waters* above and *the waters* below—and it is from *the waters* below that the four beasts of Daniel chapter seven emerge (these same four together form the first beast of Revelation chapter 13). Thus, the third day of the spiritual creation week has its night and day portion occurring during the seven endtime years of [tribulation](#), with the beginning of the Tribulation concluding the second day. *The waters* above will then be [liberated](#) from bondage to sin; the saints will be empowered by the Holy Spirit that has hovered over the face of the earth, but has not yet been poured out upon all flesh as the watery firmament above was in the days of Noah. Jesus came to baptize the world with Spirit and with fire (Matt 3:11). The baptism with Spirit (Joel 2:28) occurs halfway through the seven endtime years; the baptism by fire (Matt 3:12 & Luke 12:49) occurs after the great White Throne Judgment (Rev 21:1). Baptism by Spirit was foreshadowed by what happened on the day of Pentecost following Calvary (Acts chap 2), and the latter baptism was foreshadowed by the fate of Sodom, Jerusalem's younger sister.

A typological fulfillment of baptism by Spirit will occur at or near the beginning of the seven endtime years of tribulation. This baptism will be of the Church only—of those spiritually circumcised Israelites who have been in bondage to the law of sin and death (Rom 7:25). The entirety of spiritual Israel will be delivered, or liberated, and from this point forward, all who are born of Spirit will be born free, born as spiritually empowered children of the nation that left bondage to sin and to the king of Babylon. Thus, those who are born-from-above after the seven endtime years begin are spiritual virgins; i.e., they are not born into bondage as was Ishmael, the firstborn son of Abraham, and as were all disciples today. And in understanding the course of events that leads to Christ Jesus' return (with wars and natural disasters being part of this course), disciples must first locate themselves in history, and in prophecy.

*The reader should now read Exodus chapter 2, verse 23 through chapter 4, verse 23.*

**Commentary:** Disciples today are the spiritually circumcised firstborn son of the Lord as the physically circumcised nation of Israel was the natural (Rom 11:17-24) firstborn son. And it is the Lord through the man Moses that commands Pharaoh to let His firstborn son go, or have the Lord kill Pharaoh's firstborn son[s]. It is the Lord today who commands the spiritual king of Babylon to let His spiritual firstborn son go, or have the Lord kill the firstborn of Babylon.

*The reader should now read Isaiah chapter 43, and Exodus chapter 12, verses 29 through 30.*

**Commentary:** The Lord gave the lives of Egyptian firstborns, man and beast, for the liberation of His natural firstborn son. [The Lord will give the lives](#) of Babylon's spiritual and physical firstborn sons for

the liberation from sin of His firstborn spiritual son, but He has not yet given these lives. Babylon's firstborns live without having been redeemed. Unfortunately, too many spiritually circumcised Israelites also live without being redeemed through taking the [Passover sacraments](#), for the many teachers of lawlessness that ply their trade within the spiritual nation of Israel expound what they do not understand, and proclaim what they should know is wrong.

The deliverance of the spiritual nation of Israel from bondage to sin remains the mostly unknown, prophesied event that occurs when the long spiritual night that began at Calvary is darkest (i.e., at its midnighthour). This is when the great horn, the first horn of the spiritual king of Greece is broken (Dan 8:8 & 11:4)—and from the stump of this broken horn comes four horns that are the four beasts of Daniel chapter 7, and also are the four horsemen of the Apocalypse. Thus, the four beasts emerge from the sea of humanity that has been gathered under the expanse called heaven (Gen 1:8) on the light portion of the second spiritual day, that portion when the Holy Spirit empowers and liberates from sin the Church. The third spiritual day now begins with darkness: the saints are delivered into the hand (Dan 7:25) of the lawless one who comes by the workings of Satan (2 Thess 2:3-10). The light portion of this third spiritual day comes with the kingdom of the world becoming the kingdom of the Most High and of His Christ (Rev 11:15). This is also the beginning of the light portion of the long day of watching that began with darkness at Calvary in the middle of the seventieth week (Dan 9:27). The baptism of the world in Spirit will put an end to sacrifices and sin offerings, for [everyone who endures to the end will be saved](#) (Matt 24:13). And this is the good news that must be proclaimed to the world as a witness to all nations before the end (the fall of spiritual Babylon) occurs. Every person alive halfway through the seven endtime years will be born of Spirit; every person will be empowered by the Holy Spirit; and every person will have no other covering for sin (the transgression of the Law — 1 John 3:4) other than the person's obedience. No other covering will be necessary. However, the majority of the Church alive at the beginning of the seven endtime years will have rebelled against God by trying to enter His rest on the following day, just as the natural nation did in the Wilderness.

*The reader should now read Numbers chapters 13 and 14.*

**Commentary:** The physically circumcised nation was in the wilderness of Paran, the home of Ishmael, when spies were sent into the geographical representation of God's rest (Ps 95:10-11). The nation that left Egypt was as Ishmael was, and this natural firstborn son here rebelled against God by refusing to enter God's rest when told, but instead, attempted to enter on the following day. And except for Joshua and Caleb, none of this natural firstborn son ever entered God's rest. All rebelled, and all were condemned to die in the wilderness.

The natural firstborn son of God is directly analogous to the natural firstborn son of the patriarch Abraham, Ishmael. Only Abraham's natural son had been born when the two men entered Sodom to bring out Lot and to call fire down from heaven on this younger sister of Jerusalem and on her surrounding sisters. Only the Lord's natural firstborn son was of age when Israel rebelled against the

Lord. And this juxtaposition will have the liberated Church being like Ishmael, and like the Lord's natural firstborn son, in that the Church will rebel against God 2300 days (Dan 8:11-14) before Christ Jesus returns. Yes, 220 days (2520 minus 2300) after the spiritual firstborn son of God is liberated from bondage to sin, the majority of the Church will rebel against God (2 Thess 2:3) by trying to enter His rest on the following day, a day about which nothing is said. Only the seventh day is sanctified. The eighth day represents a time of judgment for all those who have never known God (Rev 20:11-15). Thus, an empowered disciple who attempts to enter God's rest on the eighth day commits blasphemy against the Holy Spirit through the disciple's denying of his or her spiritual birth.

*The reader should now read Matthew chapter 23.*

**Commentary:** Jesus tells both the crowd and his disciples that the scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat so both the crowds and his disciples are to practice and observe whatever they say, **for the person who will not hear Moses will not hear Jesus** (John 5:45-46 & Luke 16:31). The accuser of every disciple isn't Christ Jesus, but the natural second covenant, inscribed in a book and that book placed beside the ark of the covenant (Deu 31:26) as a witness against the holy nation of God. Therefore, Christ Jesus need not accuse anyone. All have been accused by their lawlessness, and all stand convicted of transgressing the law. All need mercy (Rom 11:32), and all will receive mercy when born of Spirit. Thus, disciples need not accuse the open sinner who participates in a festival of Southern Decadence of lawlessness. The defiled person already stands accused by Moses, as does the disciple who attempts to enter God's rest on the following day in the tradition of his or her spiritual teachers—and as does every other disciple stand accused.

Disciples, as Abraham did and as Jesus did, need to pray for those peoples who are affected by wars and natural disasters. None of them are any worse sinners than the disciple was, and may still be if the disciple has no love for his or her neighbor.

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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