

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 *Discipleship - Divorce & Remarriage*.

## Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of November 11, 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 Matthew chapter 19, verses 1 through 15.*

**Commentary:** The first twelve verses of the reading are about “divorce,” the last three about children, or so subheadings in most Bibles would cause the passages to appear. But the passages are all within the context of *last things*, those things Jesus did and said near the end of his three and a half year earthly ministry. Jesus entered Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the first month in chapter 21. Most of what is recorded about Jesus concerns the beginning of His ministry and the events immediately preceding Calvary—Jesus is the cornerstone of the house of God as well as the capstone of this same house; He is the *alpha* and the *omega*, the first and the last—thus, those passages relaying what Jesus said concerning divorce that come to endtime disciples in Matthew chapter 19 are visibly [physically] and invisibly [spiritually] audience specific. Jesus addressed His words to the Pharisees, the sect of natural Israel that believed in the resurrection; so His words convey “difference” from His words to Sadducees that were delivered a short while later.

*The reader should now read Matthew chapter 22, verses 23 through 33.*

**Commentary:** The issue in the foreground is the resurrection, but behind what is obvious lays the shared assumption that God permanently binds marriages so that even after death the marriage is bound.

Jesus told the Sadducees that they knew neither the Scripture, nor the power of God. Simply put, Jesus told the Sadducees that they were physically minded, spiritually deaf and dumb, and that *Theos* was not the deity of the dead but of the living. He told these Sadducees that physical marriages do not pertain to the dead, but to the living—and here is where wisdom is required: He said that *Theos* was married to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob while the four lived. Pharisees and Sadducees [and all of Israel] claimed to be the natural sons of Abraham; they claimed Abraham as their father. They contended that Jesus was a bastard, an illegitimate son.

*The reader should now read John chapter 8, verses 12 through 59.*

**Commentary:** Yes, the Jews claimed Abraham as their father, a man who had died 1800 years or so before when Jesus came claiming to have been sent by God.

What might seem to be a wandering away from the subject of divorce really isn't: if neither the Sadducees nor the Pharisees understood Scripture and the power of God, then how is it that physically minded "Christians" can understand what equally physically minded Israelites could not understand? The answer is, simply, they cannot.

The Apostle Paul said that "not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring" (Rom 9:6-7), but it is through only Isaac, the son of promise, not the son of flesh, that the offspring of Abraham will come. Paul said elsewhere that the natural descendants of Abraham are the offspring of disobedience, the offspring of slavery, the children of present day Jerusalem (Gal 4:21-31), not the heavenly city whose designer and founder is God (Heb 11:8-10).

When Paul constructs the above allegory, he establishes the correspondence that Jesus used to confound the Sadducees ... Paul understands what Jesus said to the Sadducees and Pharisees two days before Jesus was betrayed. The Father, the God and Father of the resurrected man Jesus (John 20:17), is the God of living Abraham, living Isaac, and living Jacob, no one else. He is not the God of Babylonia or Egypt, Greece or Rome. Nor is He the God of Ishmael or Esau. He is not the God of spiritual Ishmael, or of the hated son of promise, spiritual Esau. He is only the God of disciples of Christ Jesus, men and women whom He has made spiritually alive through receipt of His divine Breath [*Pneuma 'Agion*]. And the glorified Jesus will only give life (John 5:21) to those disciples of His—already made alive through being born of Spirit—whom He knows (Matt 7:21-23) and judges worthy upon His return (1 Cor 4:5).

What Paul understands is that every person, regardless of race or nationality, is spiritually dead (having no life in the heavenly realm) until the Father draws the person from the world (John 6:44) through giving the person the earnest of spiritual life, this "earnest" [like earnest money given when a real estate offer is tendered] of the Spirit being real life in the heavenly realm, but spiritual life domiciled in a tent of flesh. Thus, the mortal tent of flesh must put on immortality; the perishable must become imperishable through the glorified Jesus giving life to whom He will. And unless the mortal puts on immortality—unless Jesus gives life to this born of Spirit disciple—the life given by the Father will be lost in the lake of fire, the second death.

Every person receives physical breath when born of the water of the womb. This breathing creature is of the first Adam. Thus, when this breathing creature marries another breathing creature, also of the first Adam, God has no input into that marriage; for God consigned all of humankind to disobedience (Rom 11:32) when the first Adam was driven from the garden (Gen 3:22-24) before the man could eat of the Tree of Life. Literally, God gave humankind over to Satan so that He could have mercy upon whom He will have mercy, with mercy eventually being extended to all in the great White Throne Judgment, this mercy being a second birth through receipt of the divine Breath of God. Judgment comes after death (Heb 9:27), but the dead know nothing (Eccl 9:5). So judgment does not come after death until the person is born a second time through receipt of the

divine Breath of the Father. Therefore, a person must be born of water [of the first Adam] and of Spirit [of the last Adam, a life giving Spirit — 1 Cor 15:45] before the person can see the kingdom of God (John 3:3-8) or understand the spiritual things of God (Rom 8:7).

Until a person is born of Spirit, the person is hostile to the things of God, and indeed, cannot keep the commandments of God. The carnally or naturally minded person will label those disciples who, by faith, keep the precepts of the law as *legalists*, a moniker that every disciple who would be of endtime Israel will bear ... again, wisdom is required to understand that two sons are presently struggling in the womb of the last Eve, who is also spiritual Isaac [with God, there is neither male nor female]; who is the Zion that will bring forth a nation in a day (Isa 66:7-8), who will bring forth children, two sons, one hated by God, one loved but deceitful (Rom 9:10-13). And it is this hated son that labels his righteous brother as a *legalist*.

The hated son is presently under Grace, the righteousness of Christ Jesus that every disciple wears as a cloak that conceals the disciple's sins from the Father and from angels. But a sin concealed from God by Christ's righteousness is not a sin unknown to the Father and the Son. The Father knows whether the disciple as a son of His strives to live by the commandments of God, or rejects these commandments, believing that since Jesus fulfilled the law, the disciple is under no obligation of live by the laws of God written on his or her heart and mind through receipt of the Holy Spirit; believing that the disciple has nothing to do but hear the words of Jesus; believing that the disciple does not have to live by every word uttered by the Father, these words delivered by Jesus as either the *Logos* [*Theos*] or as the only Son of the *Logos*. It is not hard to understand why this disciple is part of the hated son, spiritual Esau. Nor is it difficult to understand why the garment of Grace must be stripped from the Body of the Son of Man when the seven endtime years of tribulation begin: through empowerment by the Holy Spirit, the Son of Man, Head and Body, will be revealed (Luke 17:30) to make known to the third part of humankind (Zech 13:7-9) the distinction between the hated son and the beloved son.

The disciple [i.e., the "Christian"] who does not by faith keep the precepts of the law (Rom 2:26) does not value either his inheritance or his birthright as a spiritual Israelite enough to strive for the promise of entering into God's rest. This disciple can utter many words against *legalists*; he or she can profess great love for the Father and the Son; but this disciple really loves disobedience, and the prince of disobedience. The god he or she worships is the Adversary, who could care less about the disciple once this disciple mentally rebels against God through choosing death on his or her day of salvation. For once the disciple chooses death Christ Jesus sculpts the person into a vessel of wrath to be endured for a season. The disciple is held to the decision he or she made when the promise of entering into God's rest still stood. And though Paul told Timothy that if anyone cleansed him or herself from what is dishonorable the person would be made into a vessel for honored usage (2 Tim 2:20-21), what must be grasped is that no person will cleanse the self from what is dishonorable unless the person has been born of Spirit, and then, only the person born of Spirit who keeps the precepts of the law by faith has truly cleansed the heart. Every other person born

of Spirit—with the promise of entering into God’s rest standing open before the person—makes him or herself part of the hated son that is still covered by Grace, and covered until the person is “revealed” in his or her judgment. Then, the disciple who presented his or her members to sin as instruments for disobedience will be condemned by the law that the disciple contended against.

Today, all disciples are of Isaac, but with some hated and some loved prior to the birth of spiritual Esau and spiritual Jacob. When the seven endtime years begin, Zion will give birth to these two sons of promise, one rejected as the natural son of Abraham was rejected; one accepted, but through much tribulation. And God (because he is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) does not enter into the marriages made between dead tents of flesh, for death ends a marriage (Rom 7:1-3)—and death before life functions as death after life.

A radical concept? Death before life ... the person who, during his or her lifetime, never knew God has no sin reckoned against the person (Rom 5:13) even though the person has died; thus, this person has earned no wages for sin (Rom 6:23) for this person was never “alive.” And without having sin reckoned against this person because of his or her absence of life, then this person can marry and divorce and marry again as the person wills—God enters into none of these marriages of the dead who bury their dead, or of the dead who eat and drink, marry and give in marriage as humankind was doing until the day Noah entered Ark. To put God into the marriages of the dead is to make God the God of Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, Tiras, Cush, Egypt, Put, Cannan, Elam, Asshut, Arpachshad, Lud, Aram; whereas God says that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The Ark of Noah formed a physical separation between the dead and the living; the Ark of the Covenant forms a physical and spiritual separation between the dead and the living. No natural Israelite dwelt inside the Ark of the Covenant. All were dead (i.e., spiritual lifeless) as was all of humanity physically dead except for the eight who entered Noah’s Ark ... understand well, Noah’s neighbors who mocked him for spending a century building a very large ship were dead meat that still breathed throughout that century—they were dead meat when they “took as their wives any they chose” (Gen 6:2).

The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.” But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. (Gen 6:5-8)

For the sake of Noah, God does not immediately kill all of humanity. But every person is as good as dead, for none of them will be allowed into the Ark. Not Noah’s beautiful young neighbor, nor Noah’s talented second cousin, nor any of the mighty men of renown. Every one of these men [and women] was dead even though they continued to walk around for a century. They were dead because God drove Adam from the garden before he could eat of the Tree of Life; they were

dead because Adam had not covered his nakedness with obedience; they were dead because they grieved God that he had made *adam* [lower case “a”].

The Ark of the Covenant was carried by poles on the shoulders of Levites, the natural sons of Abraham, with Levites now being like the waters that covered the earth in the days of Noah. Stay with this analogy: the sea of humanity is as the waters that covered the face of the depth in the “P” creation account [the Genesis abstract for the plan of God]—and as these waters were divided, so too was humanity divided through birth from above (being born of Spirit). Thus, physical waters are lifeless until lifted above the heavens through spiritual birth (day two of the abstract; Gen 1:6-8), and on the following day, from these lifeless lower waters emerge the beasts of Daniel chapter 7 as well as the amalgamation of these beasts (the spiritual kings of Greece sans the body of the king of the North) three and a half years later (*cf.* Dan 7:11-12; Rev 13:1-3). The king of Greece (*cf.* Dan 8:21; 10:20; 2:39) is not a single demonic spirit that rules over the earth through the appetites of the flesh, but a coalition of five demonic kings, the first or great king of this coalition to be broken in a manner foreshadowed by the death of Alexander the Great—broken because he is the figurative firstborn son of the Adversary; a firstborn not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God; a firstborn analogous to the firstborn of Pharaoh (Exod 12:29); a firstborn broken by the giving of lives in heaven and on earth for the ransom of spiritually circumcised Israel from bondage to sin and death (Isa 43:3-4); a firstborn by being the first angel to succumb to the iniquity found in an anointed cherub (Ezek 28:14-15).

God claims all firstborns as His own, but He took the descendants of the tribe of Levi “from among the people of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb” (Num 3:12). The Levites belonged to God to do with as He pleased in lieu of all firstborns: “On the day that I struck down all the firstborns in the land of Egypt, I [*YHWH*] consecrated for my own all the firstborn in Israel, both of man and beast. They are mine: I am the Lord” (*v.* 13) ... natural Israel was the firstborn physical son of God (Exod 4:22), the nation that is to God as Ishmael was to Abraham. And the Levites were taken as the firstborn of this firstborn physical son.

The Apostle Peter said that since Calvary, disciples “are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his [God’s] own possession” (1 Pet 2:9). As natural Israel was the holy nation of God (Exod 19:5-6), the firstborn physical son of *Yah* [*Theos*], disciples collectively as the Church are now the holy nation of the Father [*Theon*]. And as *Yah* took the tribe of Levi to serve Him in lieu of taking the firstborns of all Israel, the Father has taken the Radical Remnant that left spiritual Babylon in the 16<sup>th</sup>-Century to spiritually serve in the temple of God as the Levites served in the physical temple ... a bold claim? Too bold? No, not too bold, but a claim made that will be difficult for spiritually circumcised Israelites who have remained in Babylon to accept; for those disciples still in Babylon fear even the shadow of the Sabbath, the least of the commandments (Matt 5:19). They are an extremely fearful people; they are cowards who will not enter into God’s rest. They spurn *legalism* as if keeping the precepts of the law by faith were the spiritual Black Plague.

But not all of the Radical Remnant is of this Remnant, just as not all of Israel is of Israel. Most of this remnant is of Babylon, an easy call to make, one visible in

heaven and on earth through when the disciple enters or attempts to enter God's rest. Thus, whereas Anabaptist disciples are spiritual Levites, it is Sabbatarian Anabaptists who have the spirit of prophecy (*cf.* Rev 12:17; 19:10) that form the seven named churches of Revelation chapters 2 and 3. In topology, this Remnant is the reality of the seven pair of clean animals and single pair of every other species that entered the Ark with the Eight, now Christ Jesus and the angels to the seven churches. The seven named churches are foreshadowed by the seven pair of clean animals—and by Joshua. The single pair of every other species is the antetype of those endtime disciples who leave the hated son, spiritual Esau, to join with the seven named churches as Caleb joined with Israel prior to the Passover liberation of the natural nation from physical bondage. Caleb was of Esau. And the Remnant of the Woman's Offspring will be to the third part of humanity (Zech 13:9), born of Spirit halfway through the seven endtime years, as the Lamb of God is to the 144,000 (Rev 14:1-5) during these same last three and half years; hence, this Remnant will be empowered by the Spirit as the two witnesses were empowered through their 1260 day ministry in the first half of the Tribulation. This Remnant will also have a 1260 day ministry, during which it leads the third part of humanity as Joshua and Caleb led Israel across the Jordan and into the Promised Land of God's rest; the victory won by patiently enduring to the end.

All of the above is truth that the one who would teach the Remnant of the Woman's Offspring will acknowledge—the teacher of spiritual Israel who does not acknowledge the above is true does not build on the foundation Paul laid in the heavenly city. This teacher will die either physically or spiritually during the first 1260 days of the Tribulation so that he or she cannot teach the third part of humanity that today is hostile to God. Therefore, the problem of divorce remains to be unraveled: since Anabaptist disciples are spiritual Levites, separated from Christianity as the descendants of Levi were separated from natural Israel, then do the additional restrictions placed upon the marriages of Levites pertain to the Remnant?

Again, wisdom is required: merely because a person was born into and has been reared in an Anabaptist household doesn't make the person a disciple of Christ Jesus. Unless a person cleanses his or her heart—the Father begins this cleansing by drawing the person from the world as Abraham's father Terah took his sons from Ur to Haran on the way to God's rest, but contrary to what Evangelical Christianity teaches, the disciple by faith must complete the mental journey from the land of his or her nativity to spiritual Judea—the person is not circumcised of heart and mind. And if not spiritually circumcised, the person is only outwardly a Christian, or an Anabaptist, a state analogous to the situation that affected natural Israel in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century CE, the situation that Paul discusses in Romans chapter 2.

It can be here said that no one is merely a Christian outwardly through professing with one's mouth that Jesus is Lord of God—through mumbling the *Sinners' Prayer*—but a Christian is one inwardly who has been circumcised of heart and mind, with the heart cleansed by faith before circumcision. The benchmark for circumcision by faith is the faith displayed by the patriarch Abraham prior to circumcision (Rom 4:11-12). “By faith Abraham obeyed when

he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise” (Heb 11:8-9). The disciple [that person the Father has drawn from the world] will by faith mentally journey to spiritual Judea, a mental landscape unknown to the person, and the disciple will dwell in this landscape as a stranger in the land of his or her inheritance: the person will live as a spiritual Judean, keeping the Sabbaths of God, keeping the precepts of the law (Rom 2:26), doing those things that will make the person a Jew inwardly.

The Christian who by faith keeps the precepts of the law and the Observant Jew who by faith professes that Jesus is Lord (Rom 10:6-9) are both inwardly standing on the foundation that Paul laid in heavenly Jerusalem. They stand together, and they will inherit together—and none other will inherit as firstfruits, for there is no other foundation for the house of God but the one Paul laid.

The vast majority of self-professing Christianity remains in Babylon. Most “Christians,” including Anabaptists, dwell in Babylon without yet being born of Spirit, and most of those who have been born of Spirit dwell as spiritual beasts waiting to be slaughtered at the dedication of the house of God. Only those “Christians” who have about them a different Spirit as Caleb had a different spirit (Num 14:24) will enter into God’s rest. Thus—and here is the difficulty—most “Christians” are as spiritually *common* or *unclean* as anyone in the world. They are not holy, and a person of the Remnant should not marry one.

Because of inner blindness, there is always difficulty in moving from physical to spiritual; from taking a an audience specific passage from Moses and applying its principles to endtime disciples. Overviews are somewhat easy, but the following is not:

*The reader should read Leviticus chapter 21, verses 1 through 15, followed by 1 Corinthians chapter 7.*

**Commentary:** Until a person has been born of Spirit, the person is spiritually dead—and all this person does in the flesh is only of the flesh. The person is a spiritual corpse in a manner directly analogous to how the first Adam was a physical corpse until *Elohim* [singular in usage] breathed into his nostrils (Gen 2:7). Thus, those things done in the flesh are forgiven by Jesus’ death at Calvary and exist no more when the person is born of Spirit, even though the person retains memory of those things.

A marriage made between two spiritual corpses is not a marriage made in the heavenly realm, the logic behind what Paul writes in his epistles to the saints at Corinth. Therefore, if one of these spiritual corpses wishes to leave a marriage made in the flesh when the other spiritual corpse receives spiritual life through being born of Spirit, the one who has been made alive is not bound by the marriage made in the flesh, but becomes free to marry again, but only to a person who has been born of Spirit ... here is the problem: how does a disciple know if the other person has been born of Spirit? And for a spiritual Levite, spiritual birth of the spouse alone is not enough: the disciple must also be another spiritual Levite.

But marriages are only made in the flesh, between the tents of flesh in which born-from-above sons of God dwell. Every disciple will, as the lawfully betrothed

Bride of Christ, remain single in the heavenly realm until the Wedding Feast following Christ Jesus' return.

The Apostle Paul wrestled with this problem which Moses never addressed because no one prior to Jesus as the last Adam had been born of Spirit, with actual life in the heavenly realm. Jesus did not address this problem for the same reason. Rather, Jesus gave to His disciples the authority to resolve problems such as these, with these resolutions conforming to the laws of God.

Paul's opinion was that remaining unmarried simplified problems, but that it was better to marry than for the hormonal demands of the body to cause the person to lust after what was not lawful to have.

Nothing has since changed. If the born of Spirit disciple finds that the tent of flesh in which this son of God dwells is single, life might well be simpler if the person remained single. If the spiritual corpse to which the born of Spirit disciple is married wishes to remain married, then God will enter into this marriage through the one spouse having been born of Spirit. The marriage will be bound. The disciple will not be free to remarry as long as the spiritually dead spouse desires to remain in the marriage.

If a born of Spirit disciple is released from a marriage because the spouse does not desire to live with a spiritual Judean, this born of Spirit disciple can only marry another disciple as a Levite could only marry a virgin (Lev 21:13). Now comes the tricky part: if the disciple married proves false through later rebelling against God and rejecting living by the laws of God, then is this marriage truly bound by God?

The above condition has afflicted the splintered churches of God since 1994. If a baptized disciple wants out of a marriage, the disciple need only begin attending with a different splinter to get one free *divorce and remarriage* card, which truly accumulates no rewards in the heavenly realm.

Based upon the track record of the splintered churches of God for the past decade, a few observations can be made: too many divorces are occurring for trivial reasons, so the existing policies of Sabbatarian Anabaptists do not work. Disciples within the splintered churches of God look too much like *the world*. Change has to occur, and must begin with every disciple. And that change is within marriages, not after a marriage has failed ... it is time for Sabbatarian Anabaptists to reexamine the relationship between husbands and wives within marriages.

A failed marriage is akin to law suits between brethren, an evil made necessary because circumcision of the heart is not readily visible.

A marriage made between two spiritual corpses is not bound by God—neither spiritual corpse is an Israelite, circumcised of heart and mind. But the practice of marrying and giving in marriage that specifically typifies the world in Noah's day, and again typifies when the seven endtime years of tribulation begin stands contrary to the intentions of God. Endtime disciples are not to remarry and give in remarriage as the world does. A distinction must be made.

*Yah* [*Theos*] divorced ancient Israel, but was not free to marry again until He left the heavenly realm as His only Son (*cf.* John 1:1-2, 14; 3:16) to die at Calvary as the man Jesus. But Jesus' disciples seem to believe that remarriage logically follows divorce ... perhaps that old self needs to die on the Cross before the

divorced disciple remarries. If that old self doesn't die, the second marriage will, most likely, become a repeat of the first.

A person does not inherit eternal life through fornication in the backseat of a Chevrolet: sin does not beget everlasting life. Rather, life is the gift of God, received when the Father draws the person from the world. And if anything is learned from the splintered churches of God it is that spiritual life is a gift more rarely given than previously imagined.

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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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