

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 judgments made beforehand .

[Printable/viewable PDF format to display Greek or Hebrew characters](#)

## Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of February 11, 2012*

*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.*

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In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples first, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops. I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows. And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God, but the one who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God. And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

But he [Jesus] said to him, "Man, *who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?*" And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." (Luke 12:1–15 emphasis added)

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The things of this world belong to this world and will remain in this world: heaven isn't now and won't be in the future littered with rusting cars and stuffed garbage bags, for things with mass cannot enter the timeless heavenly realm where men exist as projections of energized thought. Jesus did not come into this world to referee affairs of this world; He did not come so that Caesar would have more equitable taxation. Rather, Jesus admonished His disciples not to fear entities that can only kill the fleshly body [τὸ σῶμα] and can do nothing else to the disciple; for the fleshly body cannot inherit the kingdom (1 Cor 15:50). It is the inner self [τὴν ψυχὴν—*the soul*] that will enter heaven or will be cast into the lake of fire when judgments are revealed; for the soul is not immortal but is subject to the flames that separate earth and the physical creation from the intangible heavenly realm.

To use Jesus as the basis for establishing social welfare programs is to create a differing Jesus than the one that lived, the one that was the reality of manna, this reality expressed in Jesus feeding the five thousand and the four thousand not with a hoarfrost-like cereal grain but with already baked bread and with meat [fish], disclosing that Jesus' disciples had to do no work in transforming living bread from heaven into living sustenance that sustains the inner self and by extension, the disciple's fleshly body.

However, the inner self of a person in whom unbelief dwells blocks the light that is God, with this blockage being sufficient to prevent this inner self from passing through the flames that separate the supra-dimensional heavenly realm from the cosmos. Unbelief will cause the inner self to *absorb combustion* so that this inner self will be as the Adversary will be [was from the perspective of God] about whom the prophet Ezekiel records the Lord saying,

In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so *I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you.* All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever. (Ezek 28:16–19 emphasis added)

Physical fire—the type of fire with which people are familiar—comes from the oxidation of elements. But rust is the result of the oxidation of iron and copper fire scale comes from the oxidation of copper; so metals usually slowly decompose through

oxidation as opposed to most carbon compounds that are quickly consumed in visible flames ... a person driving along a farm road and seeing in a field an iron-wheeled tractor rusting in peace doesn't think of the steady oxidation of the tractor's cast iron components as burning in flames. The slow reduction of the tractor to a mound of ferric oxide doesn't fit the stereotypical image of *fire*. But the construction of *hell* by the imagination of a Christian does have fire being flames: to most Christians the lake of fire that is the second death seems like a lake burning in flames as a tar pit might ignite and burn, a lake of flames that are not quite hot enough to utterly consume the person but plenty hot to cause the person to writhe in pain and agony. But from where did such a conception come?

The sons of Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord and built in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom high places of Topheth to burn their firstborn sons and daughters—to pass their firstborn children through the flames, an abominable practice of earlier Canaanite peoples. But this Valley of the Son of Hinnom—*Gehenna*—shall be called the Valley of Slaughter, a valley of corpses that feed birds and beasts, scavengers, for there will be no one in Jerusalem to drive them away, this time foreshadowed by when the men of Babylon razed the temple and burned earthly Jerusalem and the land became a waste (Jer 7:30–34).

When a remnant of Judah returned from Babylon, the Valley of the Son of Hinnom at the edge of Jerusalem became the location of the city dump, where the debris of the city was burned in fires that continued to smolder day by day, week by week, year after year: the fires of *Gehenna* became everburning because they were continually fueled by the refuse of Jerusalem, which was an earthly city and is the heavenly city that will be the Bride of Christ, a city in which angels/spirit beings must measure the temple. The flames of *Gehenna* are the flames of the lake of fire, where the refuse of heavenly Jerusalem is burned—where unbelieving disciples meet their fates when judgments are revealed.

The shadow and copy/type of the lake of fire is seen in the Book of Daniel:

Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought. So they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar answered and said to them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the golden image that I have set up? Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, bagpipe, and every kind of music, to fall down and worship the image that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be cast into a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you out of my hands?" Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury, and the expression of his face was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. *He ordered the furnace heated seven times more*

than it was usually heated. And he ordered some of the mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Then these men were bound in their cloaks, their tunics, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the burning fiery furnace. Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace overheated, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell bound into the burning fiery furnace. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "True, O king." He answered and said, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods." Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the burning fiery furnace; he declared, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men. The hair of their heads was not singed, their cloaks were not harmed, and no smell of fire had come upon them. Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants, who trusted in him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God." (Dan 3:13–28 emphasis added)

How does a person cause a furnace to be heated seven times more than it was usually heated? Certainly the furnace will not be seven times hotter; for a furnace capable of melting gold for a pour, or of melting silver or iron will reach temperatures of about 2000°F. A furnace seven times hotter would then be 14,000°F, not a temperature that King Nebuchadnezzar could have obtained. Thus, seven times more than usually heated must, if factual, represent the quantity of heat being produced, not the temperature of the furnace, which would be in agreement with the men who cast Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the furnace dying from the heat; for the furnace would not have been able to contain the flames.

There was no unbelief found in Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; there was nothing that could catch and retain the heat. Thus, the flames of the furnace passed around and above these three without harming them, with the spirit being in the flames with them making certain nothing happened to these three.

Fire that cannot be contained by a furnace is also fire that cannot be contained by a lake or by a small narrow valley in which the city of Jerusalem burned its refuse. Fire of this quantity is as fire that separates dimensions, suggesting that the lake of fire doesn't reside at a particular geographical location but is everywhere as an inescapable boundary through which sons of God must pass to enter heaven. *Gehenna*, now, becomes the metonymical location for the lake of fire that represents the second death, with all of the cosmos being as an island in this lake ... the lake of fire arrives with the

returning Messiah (Rev 19:20) because the separation between heaven and earth is breeched by the Second Advent and the resurrection of the saints, this breech exposing the fire in a particular location; i.e., exposing the fire separating the dimensions where Christ Jesus comes as King of kings and Lord of lords.

The men of Babylon who threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the overheated furnace were without faith, without belief in God, and they perished as will every sinner regardless of whether the sinner is under the Law or not. It simply doesn't matter whether a Christian sinner is under the Law or under grace. Having access to the Law is enough to cause the Christian to be responsible for striving to keep the law, with unintentional transgressions being covered by the garment of grace (i.e., Christ Jesus' righteousness). If the Christian chooses not to read Scripture or chooses not to believe Scripture, the Christian remains responsible for what is written in Scripture, meaning that ignorance of the Law is never an excuse for wrongdoing for the Law is the codified expression of love for God, and love for neighbor and brother—and the person with love for neighbor and brother doesn't need love to be codified, but will practice love as his or her natural expression of concern for others (Rom 2:14–16).

The one like, in Nebuchadnezzar's words, a son of the gods that escorted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego through the fiery furnace forms a shadow and type of *Christ Jesus who reveals judgments made beforehand when He comes again as the Messiah*. He either will or won't give life to those who are already alive (John 5:21), with this second giving of life coming through the perishable flesh putting on immortality; for Christ Jesus is the present God of the living, not the God of the dead, with *the dead* being those human persons able to bury the dead of themselves (see Matt 8:22) but who know nothing of the Father yet fill pews in Christian worship services every Sunday ... in this present age, the principle activity of Christian pastors is burying corpses.

But it is to rust where *Philadelphians* need to return: human life—the life of *nephesh*—is sustained by the *dark fire* of cellular oxidation of simple carbohydrates whereas the life of spirit beings and angelic sons of God are sustained by the *bright fire* that is the glory of God:

Over the heads of the living creatures there was the likeness of an expanse, shining like awe-inspiring crystal, spread out above their heads. And under the expanse their wings were stretched out straight, one toward another. And each creature had two wings covering its body. And when they went, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of many waters, like the sound of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army. When they stood still, they let down their wings. And there came a voice from above the expanse over their heads. When they stood still, they let down their wings. *And above the expanse over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness with a human appearance. And upward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were gleaming metal, like the appearance of fire enclosed all around. And downward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness around him. Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the*

appearance of the brightness all around. *Such was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.* And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of one speaking. (Ezek 1:22–28 emphasis added)

Within a human person, the *dark fire* of cellular oxidation invisibly burns, consuming body fat and muscle mass in addition to the simple sugars carried by the person's blood supply—and the consumption of body fat and muscle mass by the *dark fire* of cellular oxidation is as an iron tool slowly rusting away where it was dropped in a pioneer's field. The human person is on fire, not as a torch but as an iron tool exposed to the elements of the earth. And as the *dark fire* of cellular oxidation will eventually be extinguished and the fleshly body will die, the iron tool will rust away, the integrity of its forged shape dissolving decade by decade until the axe has no edge, no blade, and the plowshare bears only its curve. Yet the son of God, angelic or human, has life in the heavenly realm, life sustained by the glory, the breath of God, with the presence of life in a timeless dimension—which is what heaven is—precluding the absence of life; for the presence of life cannot coexist with the absence of life in the same moment. Both are absolutes that exclude the other.

Because angelic sons of God are created heavenly entities, they do not have life in the heavenly moment preceding their creation—they do not have life before they receive life, a self-evident declaration, and they received life before the cosmos came into existence; for they sang for joy at its creation (Job 38:7).

Human sons of God differ from angelic sons of God in when they receive the breath of life; i.e., heavenly life that is the glory of God. For if human persons had received indwelling immortality when *Elohim* [singular in usage] had breathed life into the nostrils of the man of mud (Gen 2:7), angels would be the firstborn sons of God, not Israel (Ex 4:22), not Christ Jesus, the First of the firstfruits. Angels would stand to inherit as primogenitors, not human sons of God who would then serve angels. But human sons of God receive heavenly life *from* the beginning—from when the Logos [ὁ Λόγος] who was God [Θεός] was alone with the God [τὸν Θεόν] (John 1:1) as if these two spirit beings were one spirit being [seen in the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* functioning as one spirit] as Adam and Eve were one flesh (Gen 2:24). And this is a great mystery of God, one that angels could not comprehend when Adam received the indwelling breath of physical life.

Jesus asked the Father to return to Him the glory He had in the beginning: “And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed” (John 17:5). And because human sons of God are twice born, once physically from the breath of life that Adam received and a second time from the breath of God [πνεῦμα Θεοῦ] in the breath of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ], the life that human sons of God receive is that of the Son, with this breath preceding/predating when angelic sons of God received indwelling life. Hence, in the timeless heavenly realm, where *moments* function as geographical locations function here on earth, angels do not have life in the heavenly moment that was the beginning but human sons of God through the indwelling breath of Christ do. Thus, angels are ministering spirits to the saints (Heb 1:14) who precede them in birth order.

But a human son of God in whom unbelief dwells cannot cross the boundary of fire that separates the supra-dimensional heavenly realm from the creation and all that has

been made. In analogy and apparently in fact, the human son of God in whom unbelief dwells burns spiritually as an iron tool rusts quietly: this human son of God becomes a brand [a burning length of wood] that must be plucked from the lake of fire if this son of God is to live. And when the brand knows that he (or she) has been plucked from the fire to do a work for God, that work will get done.

Again, Jesus was not the arbitrator of disputes between brothers or between neighbors as Moses was and as Solomon was. Those things that are physical are not of prime concern to Jesus. Yes, the Father knows that Jesus' disciples have needs; e.g., food, shelter, raiment. But satisfying these needs will not get the disciple across the fire that separates dimensions. Belief of God will, with belief of God coming via faith. Therefore, the disciple can expect to be tested by an absence of physical needs, an absence of great enough length that the disciple has concerns for his or her physical life. If these concerns come to nothing because the disciple trusts that he or she is worth more to God than sparrows or lilies, then the disciple can expect needs to be met. And it is for this reason that disciples are to take no anxious thought for what they will eat or what they will wear or where they will sleep: they are to fully trust God to supply their needs even if they face impossible situations as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego faced.

The Christian who truly believes that the end of the age is at hand should do what he or she reasonably can to sustain life amid social chaos and the collapse of society, but this Christian should never trust in him or herself for the person's survival. Rather, the Christian is to trust God, all the while realizing that his or her physical body is like a tractor in a field quietly rusting in peace. The Christian's physical body is a brand to be plucked from the flames or not to be plucked out when judgments are revealed, with the Christian determining him or herself whether he or she will be plucked from certain death by whether the Christian is a doer of the Law, with love for brother, unborn and already born.

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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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