

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 about the spirit in man.

Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of February 23, 2008

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 Ecclesiastes chapter 3, especially verses 16 through 22.

Commentary: The Preacher writes that there is a time for everything: in perhaps the most familiar lines from Scripture, bipolar oppositions are linked by the common element of there being a time for each. "*A time to keep silence, and a time to speak*"; *a time to conceal, and a time to reveal*—what the physicalness of the creation has concealed from Israel and the remainder of humankind (i.e., the beginning and end of what God has done, v. 11), the physicalness of the creation will reveal to first Israel, then to the remainder of humankind.

The Apostle Paul argues indirectly against attempting to take meaning from Scripture by adding precept to precept, line to line, the means by which the drunk priests of Ephraim caused the house of Israel to stumble, fall backwards, be snared and taken (Isa 28:13). Paul wrote,

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by the unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (Rom 1:16–20)

So for Paul and for those who build on the foundation Paid laid in heavenly Jerusalem (1 Co 3:10-11), the visible things of this world reveal the invisible things of God, with the visible things preceding spiritual things (1 Co 15:46).

It was not time to reveal the concealed things of God earlier than when the Apostle Paul wrote, and it apparently wasn't time to reveal these hidden things until the end of the age; for when God delivered *Christendom* into the hands of the spiritual king of

Babylon at the council of Nicea (ca 325 CE) as God had delivered physically circumcised Israel into the hands of King Nebuchadnezzar to begin seventy years of exile, typological exegesis (the reading strategy by which meaning is taken from Scripture through typology or analogies) fell out of favor and continued more or less out of favor throughout the following 1200 years. When the Protestant Reformers separated from the Roman Church, beginning with Zwingli in 1525 CE (Luther separated in 1517, but his supporters demonstrated that his teachings were “Catholic”), a concerted move away from typology followed, with the most significant countercurrent coming from Samuel Mather in 1670 CE and Jonathon Edwards nearly a century later. Not until the beginning of the 21st-Century did a serious return to typology develop.

Because of the unrighteousness of the Christian Church and of Christian pastors, readily seen by their transgression of the Law of God every Sunday, the invisible attributes of God could not and were not perceived throughout the twelve centuries (that can be likened to the seventy years Israel was in Babylon and Jerusalem was uninhabited) when all of Israel was in mental captivity to the spiritual king of Babylon.

- The Church is the spiritual Body of Christ (1 Co 12:27).
- What happened to the physical body of Christ reveals and precedes what happens to the spiritual Body.
- Jesus’ physical body was crucified (John 19:18 *et al*), and the spiritual Body is crucified with Christ (Rom 6:6).
- Jesus’ physical body was resurrected from death (John 20:17), and the spiritual Body will be resurrected in a resurrection like his (Rom 6:5).
- If the spiritual Body will be resurrected in a resurrection like Christ’s, then the spiritual Body must also die as the physical body died.

When Jesus asked His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” (Matt 16:13), He did not then ask who He was. That would come after His disciples answered His initial question. And the answer given to His initial question had Israel pointing backwards at then historical men of God: Israel did not know who the Son of Man was, nor did His disciples.

- Jesus is the Head of the Church (Col 1:18 *et al*).
- Jesus and the Church, together, make one entity: the Son of Man.
 1. Jesus is the “uncovered” head of the Son of Man.
 2. Disciples collectively as the Church form the “covered” body (covered by the garment of Grace; i.e., Jesus’ righteousness).
 3. “Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man” (Luke 17:26), when the Son of Man is revealed (v. 30), as in being disrobed so that both the head and body are covered only by their respective obedience to God.

Because of the unrighteousness and ungodliness of Christendom beginning long before God sent Christendom into spiritual captivity, disciples did not know the beginning and end of what God was doing and has done (Eccl 3:11), even though Jesus revealed all things to His disciples in figurative [metaphorical] speech. But in a metaphor, one thing is said to be another thing which it is not. Therefore, the ungodliness of Hellenist converts that is found in the mystery of lawlessness (2 Thess 2:7) that was already at work while Paul lived caused Christendom to believe the lie of

the old serpent, Satan the devil, that the Church would not die. This is the lie the first Eve believed (Gen 3:4) before she ate forbidden fruit; this is the lie that the last Eve believed before the Church ate forbidden fruit.

When Jesus' disciples could not readily identify who the Son of Man was, Jesus asked, "But who do you say that I am?" (Matt 16:15). Peter answered: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (v. 16). And Jesus said, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (v. 17).

There is a problem here that is not readily apparent in English translations: Peter's name was not Simon Bar-Jonah! Peter was not the son of any Jonah, but of John (John 1:42; 21:17). This difference is seen in Greek:

- Simon Bar-Jonah is written as Σίμων Βαριωνά, with the letters /ιωνά/ representing "Jonah."
- Jesus would give only one sign that He had come from God, the sign of Jonah [Ἰωνά].
- Peter was the son of John, written as Ἰωάννου.
- The aspiration or /á/ precedes the nasal consonant /v/ ["n"] in "John," which has the English character /"h"/ representing this aspiration rather than follows the nasal as in "Jonah."
- Throughout Scripture, aspiration or vocalized breath represents the receipt of the Holy Spirit, or divine Breath of God [πνεῦμα ἅγιον].

By Jesus calling Peter the son of *Jonah* rather than the son of *John* in a passage that begins with asking for signs, Jesus uses vowel aspiration to disclose what it means to receive the Holy Spirit and have the Father reveal knowledge directly to disciples. Jesus gives to His disciples a sign that was undetectable by the ungodly and unrighteous that believed Satan's lie about not dying, this lie manifesting itself in two forms, the first collectively and the second individually, for disciples are collectively and individually the Body of Christ.

Christendom teaches that a person is physically born with spiritual life—with an immortal soul. Certainly, Augustine of Hippo wrote, "This faith maintains, and it must be believed: neither the soul nor the human body may suffer complete annihilation, but the impious shall rise again into everlasting punishment, and the just into life everlasting" (*On Christian Doctrine*. Bk 1, XXI. Trans. D.W. Robertson, Jr.). However, the Apostle Paul wrote, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 6:23).

If the human body is composed of the dust of the earth (of base elements) as are the bodies of beasts (Eccl 3:18–20), then do the bodies of beasts not suffer complete annihilation, the logical extension of what Augustine taught? That would be his argument, except that Augustine also wrote, "A great thing is man, made in the image and likeness of God, not in that he is encased in a mortal body, but in that he excels the beasts in the dignity of a rational soul" (Bk. 1, XXII). So for Augustine it is the presence of an immortal soul that separates human beings from other breathing creatures. And because what Augustine writes is contrary to what both Paul and Solomon wrote, Augustine and his borrowed teaching about humankind having immortal souls must be rejected. Augustine must not be believed!

A man is not *encased in a mortal body*, but is this mortal body until he is born of Spirit by receiving the divine Breath of God as the earnest of receiving glorification ... “earnest” money paid to secure a real estate contract is real money. Likewise, receiving the earnest of the Spirit is receiving real life in the heavenly realm, albeit life domiciled in a tent of flesh.

The prophet Ezekiel wrote,

The word of the Lord came to me: “What do you mean by repeating the proverb concerning the land of Israel, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge’? As I live, declares the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: *the soul who sins shall die*. (18:1–4 emphasis added)

“Yet you say, ‘Why should not the son suffer for the iniquity of the father?’ When the son has done what is just and right, and has been careful to observe all my statutes, he shall surely live. *The soul who sins shall die*. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.” (18:19–20 emphasis added)

A man—a person—is a soul that can die, but is a soul who shall not suffer condemnation because of the sin and sinfulness of his father (or she, her mother), nor enter into God’s rest because of the righteousness of father or mother. And this was the state of all human beings until the man Jesus came to John the Baptist to fulfill all righteousness by being baptized (Matt 3:15).

Now, the wisdom of God: when the angel Gabriel came to Zechariah to tell him that he would father a son and that he would name his son John (Luke 1:13), not a name common to Zechariah’s lineage, Zechariah questioned God and was struck dumb. So when John was born and was to be circumcised and named on the eighth day, neighbors and relatives wanted to name the boy Zechariah after his father, but Elizabeth said, “No; he shall be called John [Ἰωάννης]” (v. 60), with the name’s case ending producing the final /“s”/. Zechariah confirmed that his son was to be named “John” (v. 63), and immediately he could speak, a sign that disclosed to all the specialness of the child.

Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he” (Matt 11:11).

John was more than a prophet: he was the messenger sent by God to prepare the way for the *Logos* as *Theos* entering His creation (John 1:1–3) as His only Son (John 3:16), the man Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:14). But the person who will be raised from the dead and glorified will be greater than John.

The prophet Jonah was raised from the dead (Jon 2:2, 5–6), and according to Jewish tradition, twice raised from the dead, the first time as a child by Elijah; thus the book of Jonah is read on *Yom Kipporim*.

- The movement of aspiration from in front of the nasal consonant [áv] to behind the nasal consonant [vâ] reveals a movement of life coming from “breath.”
- Until born of Spirit (i.e., the divine Breath of God, πνεῦμα ἅγιον), a person is a soul that consists of the person’s fleshy body [*soma* — σῶμα] and the

person's shallow or natural breath [*psuche* — ψυχὴν], with *psuche* too often translated into English as “soul” (see Matt 10:28).

The person who is body [*soma*] and breath [*psuche*] can receive the promise of inheriting eternal life, but has not received eternal life; has not received the earnest of the Spirit. And this is the state or status of every person through John the Baptist, the greatest of all who were born of women. This is the state of those about whom the Preacher writes when he wrote, “I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them that they may see that they themselves are but beasts” (Eccl 3:18).

When Solomon wrote that God was testing men about what they believed concerning an afterlife, it was not time to reveal the plans God had for men. The physicalness of this world concealed what God had/has done from the beginning to the end, with Christ Jesus being both the beginning and the end (Rev 22:13). It was not time to reveal the movement of breath as seen when Jesus called Peter (whose given name was Simon, son of John) *Simon Bar-Jonah*, who will be resurrected from death upon Jesus' return, but who was given everlasting life when he believed the One who sent Jesus (John 5:24) even though he was not born of Spirit until the glorified Jesus breathed on him and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον]” (John 20:22).

To fulfill all righteousness, Jesus was baptized and the Spirit of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] descended upon Him as a dove. After Jesus breathed on ten of His disciples, Peter included, the ten were no longer *soma* and *psuche*, but he had added to them life [*pneuma* — πνεῦμα] as a second life coming from receiving a second breath, with this life coming from heaven and able to return to the heavenly realm as wind [in Greek: πνεῦμα] blows where it wishes, with men then not knowing where it goes or from where it comes (John 3:8).

No one can see the kingdom of God or know the things of God or the thoughts of God until the person has been born of Spirit (John 3:5). No one can die a second death until the person has been born a second time, with this birth invisible in this world but revealed in type by the person's birth by the water of the womb, for what is born of the flesh is flesh (v. 6) and thinks the thoughts of the flesh (Rom 8:5–8) and cannot please God, nor keep the laws of God for the flesh is born consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32) because of the sin of the first Adam (Rom 5:12-14).

Disciple are today with two lives; hence, disciples are πνεῦμα καὶ ψυχὴ καὶ σῶμα [*pneuma and psuche and soma* or translated as *deep breath coming from the Breath given to the last Adam, and shallow breath coming from the breath given the first Adam, and the flesh that comes from the dust of the earth*] (1 Thess 5:23). These two breaths and the flesh constitute the whole disciple.

It wasn't time to reveal what Jesus fully meant about giving only one sign earlier than the time of the end, when the Body of Christ would be or would soon be resurrected from death.

When asked for a sign, Jesus said, “When it is evening, you say, “It will be fair weather, for *the sky is red.*” And in the morning, “It will be stormy today, for *the sky is red* and threatening.” You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times” (Matt 16:2–3 emphasis added). One sign—*the sky is red*—signifies two differing weather conditions, with peace or calmness going into darkness, and with threatening weather going into the light.

The sign of Jonah is also this sort of a sign: when the physical body of Jesus was resurrected from death, the world entered a period of darkness that has seen relative calmness throughout the Christian era, but when the spiritual Body of Christ will be resurrected from death, the seven endtime years of tribulation begin, a period of turmoil unlike any previously seen by humankind, a period that ushers in the coming of Christ, the coming of *light*.

As John the Baptist served as a type of the last Elijah who will restore all things (this last Elijah is the glorified Christ Jesus), the gospel of John serves as a type of the spiritual message that will be written [inscribed] on the hearts and minds of the resurrected Body of Christ—it is by the gospel of John that disciples *Know the Lord* as *Theos* [θεός] and *Theon* [θεόν], both God, both forming one God, both together with their respective divine Breaths in the Tetragrammaton *YHWH*, then consisting of two entities.

Disciples are not today begotten but still unborn sons of God. Rather, they are fully born sons of God that are growing to maturity in this physical universe where change is possible, and actually demanded of all things. They have been raised from the dead by the Father through receiving life coming through receipt of His divine Breath (John 5:21; 6:44). They must still receive life from the Son coming when the mortal flesh puts on immortality. It is this twice receiving spiritual life that the church of God has historically not understood, largely because it simply wasn't time for the knowledge to be available to disciples.

Because of ungodliness and unrighteousness, Christendom believed the lie of that old serpent Satan the devil that the church Jesus built would not die—Jesus saying that the gates of Hades would not prevail against the church (Matt 16:18) does not mean that the church would not die as His physical body died, but that as His physical body suffered no corruption but was resurrected back to life, His spiritual Body would suffer no corruption and would be resurrected back to life.

Today, the gospel message taught by Christendom is a badly corrupted message; hence this Christendom is not of Christ but is the synagogue of Satan. And today, only a few are at work as John the Baptist worked in preparing the way for the coming of Christ. Only a few truly preach repentance.

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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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[\[Home\]](#) [\[Sabbath Readings\]](#)