

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 not to ask for the things of this world.

Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of March 28, 2009

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 Mark chapter 11.

Commentary: The context for the beginning of the chapter is Jesus entering Jerusalem as the selected Passover Lamb of God on the weekly Sabbath, the 10th of Abib. It is late afternoon when He enters; He goes to the temple, looks around, and leaves. Israel will figuratively tear down the temple on the 14th of Abib, when the leaders of the nation demand that Jesus be crucified, and Jesus will rebuild the temple when He breathes on ten of His disciples, thereby directly conveying to them the Holy Spirit and a second breath of life (John 20:22). And it is in this context of Jesus being the temple destroyed that Jesus curses the fig tree and cleanses the temple, then says, "Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, "Be taken up and thrown into the sea," and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him" (11:23). The context is the spiritual realm, where the breath [πνεῦμα] of the Logos [ὁ λόγος] was spun into the solidity of matter, and where the man Jesus, the only Son of the Logos, is the Lamb of God.

The most difficult task any disciple has is mentally moving from those things that the eye sees to those things that only the mind can see ... the physical temple, built of stones and wood, is a thing that the eye can see, but the spiritual house of God is built from living stones (1 Pet 2:4–5), the invisible new creatures born of spirit as sons of God, with Christ Jesus as both the cornerstone [the beginning] and the capstone [the end] of this temple. This spiritual second temple cannot be seen with eyes, but can be seen with the mind, which is why Paul identifies disciples as the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16) for Paul could see this temple, which takes an angel to measure (Rev 11:1–2).

The person who is physically minded cannot see the living temple of God; nor can the person who is physically minded please God. The person simply misses the point of everything Jesus said ... shortly before He was taken on the 14th of Abib, Jesus told His disciples, "I have said these things to you in figures of

speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father” (John 16:25). That hour didn’t come before Calvary even though His disciples thought He was then speaking to them plainly.

The Christian who looks for a physical temple to be built at earthly Jerusalem sees only with his or her eyes and is thus blind as natural Israel was blind. The Christian can be sincere, can love the Lord, can believe that he or she is heaven-bound, but the Christian is a spiritual infant, still too young to comprehend dual referents; the Christian is spiritually as a human child of less than 30 months of age is physically. Yet, inevitably, the Christian will think that he or she is mature in the faith, and has a spiritual Ph.D. ... patience is needed when dealing with these infant sons of God, but those who are no more mature who have set themselves up to be teachers of Israel, teaching disciples to transgress the laws of God neither deserve patience nor mercy.

One such teacher of Israel was a televangelist explicating Mark 11:24 — “Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours” — saying that the reason Christians don’t have things, why they are still in debt, why they don’t have nice homes and new cars and fine clothes was because when they prayed they didn’t really believe they would receive these things. ... the question must be asked, is the Father a God of “things,” of the trinkets of this world, of sticks and stones and the minerals of this earth. He didn’t create any of these things—that is correct!! The Father created none of the things that have been made. The Logos [ὁ λόγος] created all things made. The Logos was with [πρὸς] the Father [τὸν θεόν] in the beginning, and the Logos was God [θεὸς], and the Logos, who was θεός, entered His creation as His only Son (John 3:16) to be born as the man Jesus (John 1:14), who would receive a second birth when the divine breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] descended upon Him as a dove (Matt 3:16). He then became the firstborn Son of the Father, the First of many sons of God (Rom 8:29), all of which are the firstfruits of this earth.

If a disciple, born of spirit and circumcised of heart, asks anything in prayer, believing that the disciple will receive what is asked, the promise is that the disciple will receive what has been asked-for.

But what about the person who doesn’t hear Jesus’ words or believe Jesus? Should this person expect to receive answers to his or her prayers?

What about the hypocrite who has the law but doesn’t strive to keep it?

What about the sincere disciple worthy of patient nurturing?

No person should expect to receive anything from the Father or the Son if the person isn’t a son of God, but is instead a child of the devil —

If the person doesn’t believe Jesus in matters concerning salvation, why would the person believe that he or she will really receive answers to prayers—unless the person plays *pretend* with the Father and the Son, *pretending* that by doing evil good with come from it (Rom 3:8), with evil being nothing more than what Eve did in the Garden of God.

If a person believes the serpent’s lie that the person shall not die (Gen 3:4), that the person has an immortal soul received from the first Adam, and if the person determines for him or herself what is right and wrong, has this person not

done what the first Eve did when she ate forbidden fruit? Eve “saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise” (v. 6), and she did what any reasonable woman who no longer believed her husband would do: she took the fruit of the tree and she ate—and she didn’t immediately die—so she gave some of the fruit to her husband, who was present throughout Eve’s exchange with the serpent. She gave him forbidden fruit to eat and he ate.

Why didn’t Eve immediately die when she ate; why didn’t something happen to cause her to believe her husband, for it was her husband who relayed to her God’s instruction not to eat.

Notice, though, God said nothing about touching the tree (Gen 2:17). Apparently Adam took it upon himself to add to what God had said.

Can you envision the scene? The serpent approaching Eve, asking in an innocent tone, “Did God actually say, “You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?”” (Gen 3:1), the implication being that God had prohibited them from eating of any tree when there were so many with good fruit. Eve was quick to correct this misunderstanding: “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, “You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die”” (vv. 2–3).

But again, God said nothing about touching the tree—and if God said nothing about touching the tree, then it was Adam who introduced the subject of touching the tree as a preventative to Eve getting so near the tree that she might be tempted to pick a piece of fruit from it. It was Adam who didn’t trust Eve to do what was right. It was Adam who added to the word of God, thereby setting Eve up for the fall.

When the serpent told Eve that she wouldn’t die—did Eve even know what death was—Eve had to test the words of the serpent ... how would the scene have gone? Maybe Eve *accidentally* brushed the back of her hand against an outer branch. Nothing happened. She didn’t die. So maybe she lightly touched a leaf, and still she didn’t die—now she didn’t believe her husband but believed the serpent instead, and she picked a piece of fruit and ate.

Still nothing happened, why? She had just sinned (that is, broken the living words of God), but she had not died. In fact nothing happened. Her eyes weren’t opened. She certainly was no more wise than before. To her, the forbidden fruit was just fruit. And she took some and gave it to her husband, who saw his wife eat and not die.

Adam believed the evidence of his eyes: God said the day he ate forbidden fruit he would die, but his wife was eating and she wasn’t dying. She probably seemed to enjoy eating this forbidden fruit. So what was to stop him from eating? The evidence of his eyes would seem to make God a liar.

Adam did not know he was Eve’s “covering.” As long as he did not eat, his obedience covered the transgressions of his wife ... Adam’s covering was his obedience, just as Jesus’ obedience was His righteousness which today covers the Church.

Sin could never enter the world through the Woman made from Man, for the woman was covered by her husband, not something modern women celebrate or

even acknowledge because of how men have abused women throughout history. But it is the concept of not believing God that here needs further developed.

Adam believed what his eyes saw; Eve believed what her eyes saw. When she didn't die—that possibility introduced by the serpent—after eating, God had a credibility problem that wasn't His problem, but Adam's. And so it is today, for Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life” (John 5:24). A few moments later, Jesus added, “If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words” (vv. 46–47).

A clear and unambiguous connection exists between believing Moses' writings and not coming under judgment but passing directly from death to life, with this connection running through hearing and believing Jesus' words, with Jesus' words being the Father's words.

How much of Christendom believes Moses' writings?

Does the televangelist who explicated Mark 11:24 believe Moses?

No, she (in this case) does not. And if she doesn't believe Moses how is she to believe the words of her Husband to whom she has pledged herself ... the answer is simply, she won't. She doesn't today believe Jesus, and she will not believe Him after the seven endtime years of tribulation begin. Oh, she will swear allegiance to Christ; she will sing praises to Him; then like most modern American wives, she will do what she wants, what she thinks is best, what seems good in her eyes. And she will not understand, when judgments are revealed, why she will be counted among the tares.

The person born of spirit who will not walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6), who will not imitate Paul as he copied Jesus (1 Cor 11:1), who will not strive to keep *the just requirements of the law* (Rom 2:26) should expect to receive nothing from the Lord except the lake of fire. This person can pray, expecting to receive, and receive nothing; for the person is a hypocrite, knowing to do right but not believing either the Father or the Son enough to actually do what the person knows is right. For example, what Christian doesn't know that the seventh day is the Sabbath? Surely no Christian is so ignorant. Yet very few “Christians” keep the seventh day as the Sabbath. Most attempt to enter God's rest on the following day as Israel did in the wilderness (Num 14:40) ... how many Catholics of either the Greek or Latin Church keep the Sabbath on the seventh day? How many Protestants keep the Sabbath? How many Latter Day Saints keep the seventh day as the Sabbath? None! For Latter Day Saints believe their “prophet” Joseph rather than the Father and the Son, as Catholics follow in the traditions of the “fathers” rather than believe the Father and the Son, who changes not but is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Heb 13:8). And Evangelical Protestants seem to be in rebellion against any authority.

Catholics acknowledge that the Church changed the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week, which is akin to the Woman telling her Husband when she will come into His presence. Ultimately, she will not enter into His rest, His presence, because of her unbelief. After all, she believes herself, not her Husband. She was a feminist when women were still chattel. So it is no wonder

that centuries later the Catholic churches are called spiritual whores by their lewd sister, Protestant Christendom.

Unfortunately, those Christians who hear the groaning of the spirit and know that they should be keeping the commandments are told that if they do, they are Judaizers, a derogatory term intended to demean and intimidate the disciple who would strive to walk uprightly before the Father and the Son —

- The Torah is the Law as Jesus used the expression when He said, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish but to fulfill them” (Matt 5:17).
- The New Covenant will have the Torah [תּוֹרָה], the five books of Moses, put within everyone who is of Israel (Jer 31:33), thereby causing the person, his or her neighbor and brother to *Know the Lord*. And if the Torah is within the person, will this person not live as a Jew?
- Those Christians who contend that the question of whether Gentiles converts were to live like Jews was settled at the Jerusalem conference (Acts chap 15) ignore that immediately after the conference Paul had Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3).
- If “a Jew” is no longer a person who is circumcised outwardly but is a Christian circumcised of heart, a Christian who keeps the precepts of law (Rom 2:26–29), is this Christian not a Judaizer?
- Christians “are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for [His] own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of [Him] who called you out of darkness” (1 Pet 2:9). How can Christians proclaim these excellencies without also advocating that Christians live as Jews?
- When Jesus called Saul of Tarsus then on his way to Damascus (Acts 9:4–6), Jesus entrusted Saul to “one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there” (Acts 22:12) ... if this Ananias was a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all of the Jews at Damascus, was Ananias not keeping the commandments and thus living as a Jew?
- When Paul was on trial before Felix at Caesarea, Tertullus accused Paul of being a ringleader for “the sect [αἰρέσεως] of the Nazarenes” (Acts 24:5). Would this not make Paul a Judaizer, for the Sadducees were also described as a sect [αἵρεσιν] (Acts 5:17), as were the Pharisees [αἰρέσεως] (Acts 15:5 – αἵρεσιν was used by Paul in Acts 26:5)?
- If a Christian walks as Jesus, an observant Jew, walked (1 John 2:6) and imitates Paul, an observant Jew who by his testimony committed no offense against the Law or the Temple (Acts 25:8), as Paul imitated Jesus (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1), does this Christian not keep the commandments, the just requirements of the Torah, and live like a Jew and is thus a Judaizer?
- John says that the person born of God will keep the commandments (1 John 3:4–10), that it is the children of the devil who do not keep the commandments and live today as Gentiles though calling themselves *Christians*.

The Church began the day when Jesus was resurrected from the dead, ascended to the Father, then returned to breathe on ten of His disciples, saying, “Receive the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον]” (John 20:22). When Jesus breathed on the disciples, thereby directly transferring to them the Holy Spirit, He formed a new synagogue; for according to the Mishnah’s requirements a new synagogue could be formed anywhere by ten male Jews. And if the ten upon whom Jesus breathed were a newly formed synagogue that “with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer [προσευχῆ]” (Acts 1:14 — *cf.* Acts 16:13, 16 ... the Greek word used by Luke is also the word used for the regular prayer assemblies of the synagogue), were the ten first disciples not Judaizers?

If the early Church functioned as a competing sect of Judaism within greater Judaism, and its assemblies were meetings of a newly formed synagogue, a synagogue circumcised of heart not necessarily in the flesh, was not the early Church an assembly of Judaizers?

The testimony of Scripture is overwhelming: disciples are to practice, under the cover of Christ Jesus’ righteousness (obedience), walking uprightly before man and God—and to walk uprightly before God, disciples will strive to keep the righteous requirements of the Torah.

Silver Christendom (the Christianity of the spiritual king of Persia) is always quick to point out that if a disciple were to attempt to keep the commandments, the disciple would also have to keep the sacrificial laws. But silver Christendom’s argument discloses the lack of spiritual understanding that has come to typify *Christianity* as the world knows the religion: sin doesn’t enter the world through Eve, but through Adam, who had no covering for his sin but obedience. The sins of Israel in Egypt were not counted against the nation because the nation was in bondage to, or in subjection to the king of Egypt ... where a people is not free to keep the commandments, sin is not reckoned against the people (Rom 5:13). Until liberated from bondage to the prince of this world, humankind is consigned to disobedience and is not free to keep the commandments and therefore has no sin counted against human beings. Most of humankind will die physically without having been liberated from bondage to the prince of this world; thus, no sin is against this portion of humanity. But as Israel was liberated from bondage to Pharaoh and was thus responsible for its behavior, the new creature born of spirit is born liberated from disobedience and is thus responsible for its behavior. Israel, however, showed that it could not keep the law, that the nation was not truly capable of obedience to the law; thus, Israel needed a “covering” as Eve was covered by Adam’s obedience. And the covering given was the added animal sacrifices, with Christ Jesus becoming the reality of every animal sacrifice, for the blood of a bull or a goat could only “cover” a sin but could not pay the death penalty for that sin. Jesus paid the death penalty for every sin committed in this world by Israel when He became the reality of the goat sacrificed on the altar on *Yom Kipporim* — and as the reality of the *Azazel* goat, Jesus “covers” but does not pay the death penalty for every sin committed by Israel in the heavenly realm, where lust transgresses the commandments as adultery does in this world (Matt 5:27–8).

What silver Christendom fails to understand is that as long as disciples are under grace, the mantle of Christ Jesus’ righteousness, there is no need for

animal sacrifices to cover the transgressions of Israel. But grace ends when the Son of Man is revealed (Luke 17:30), for disciples will be filled with the Holy Spirit and thus liberated from the indwelling sin and death that presently still resides in the fleshly members of disciples. For the seven years of the Tribulation, Israel (i.e., the Christian Church) will cover itself with its obedience, or Israel will be cast into the lake of fire. Only when the Messiah comes will animal sacrifices return to cover the transgressions of Israel, but there will then be few if any transgressions of the commandments.

Because silver Christendom doesn't understand that grace is not unmerited pardon of sin, but the covering of Christ Jesus' righteousness, put on as a garment is put on; that grace pertains only to sins committed in the inter-dimensional portion of the heavenly realm; that every sin committed in this world before spiritual birth has its death penalty paid at Calvary; that a person's physical death pays for the sins of Israel committed in this world after spiritual birth. When Israel is liberated from the sin and death presently dwelling within the fleshly members of every person, the lives of firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb of God will "cover" Israel as grace ends. Every person born of spirit will then be as Jesus was when He lived physically, and will have to cover him or herself with the person's own obedience as Jesus covered Himself with His obedience—and if the person has practiced walking uprightly before God while under the mantle of grace, the person will be able to truly walk as Jesus walked.

Back to receiving what a person has asked-for: the person who asked for the things of this world is as the first thief to speak at Calvary, the thief who wanted Jesus to save his life. This person's mind is set on the things of this world, the things that pertain to the flesh, the desire of the eyes. John writes, "For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possession—is not from the Father but is from the world" (1 John 2:16). So the person who asks for the things of this world asks for things that are not of the Father ... if you ask for things that are not of the Father, should you expect to receive these things? The Father knows you have needs, and He would be remiss if He didn't supply those needs, but when you ask for the wealth of this world, can you truly expect to receive it when the wealth of this world comes from the prince of this world?

It is the prince of this world that will today supply his servants with the good things that this world has to offer; thus, the woman televangelist who preached about receiving wealth might well have already received wealth, for she is an effective servant of Satan. But she is not of God. At best she plays *pretend* with the Father and the Son, for her mind is set on the things of this world, not on the spiritual things of God where a mountain is merely the breath of the Son spun in an alternative reality as Whitehouse spin doctors "spun" the sins of a President into old news.

Jesus tells His disciples to forgive others so that our Father who is in heaven will forgive our sins, thereby establishing a solid connection between the things of this world forming a shadow and type of the invisible things of God. As disciples, we are to this world as the Father is in heaven. And if we ask for the things of this world, we will remain a part of this world, for we will not have looked up to see

the invisible things of heaven that await us ... said differently, if we want importance and preeminence in this world, if we want the things of this world and ask for those things, believing that we will receive the things of this world, we might well receive wealth and importance, but because we didn't ask for the things of God, we will not receive the things of God.

If we ask for things of God, we have no time to ask for the things of this world other than in a most cursory manner — and so ought it to be with every disciple, for the world and the things of it are passing away.

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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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