

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 context specific signs.

Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of May 16, 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 service should read or assign to be read John chapter 6.

Commentary: In the sixth chapter of John is a scriptural concept that has not been well understood or taught: the concept involves the dual presentation of ideas or narratives, and how these presentations relate to each other. In this sixth chapter, the five thousand are fed when the Passover was at hand (v. 4); so placing this chapter in a ministry timeline, John's ministry began about Passover of the Hebrew year 3787, and about Sukkoth, John baptized Jesus to fulfill all righteousness. Jesus then went into the wilderness for forty days, and shortly after those forty days John was arrested (Matt 3:12), and Jesus called His first disciples (v. 18). The Gospel of John's account seems to have John the Baptist still free when Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, first began to follow Jesus; so some reconciling of the four gospels must be undertaken, with this reconciling coming in the form that John was probably released from prison after being threatened as the apostles were initially arrested, beaten, threatened, then released. Regardless, approximately six months after Jesus' ministry began, at Passover of year 3788, Jesus first cleanses the temple (John 2:13–22).

Jesus again cleanses the temple on the 10th and 11th of Abib in the last year of His ministry, 3791. Thus, in between when He initially cleanses the temple and when He last cleanses the temple are the Passover seasons of years 3789 and 3790, and because John's narrative is a continuous account of what occurred on the festivals once Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that He, Jesus, was making and baptizing more disciples than John (John 4:1), the Passover season at which He fed the five thousand is probably 3790, the year before He is taken and crucified ... what is presented in all of the gospels is the beginning and the end of Jesus' earthly ministry. The middle years are ignored, for in type there are no middle years of the Church, which was alive in the 1st-Century and which will return to life in the 21st-Century. In the years between John's death at the end of the 1st-Century, beginning of the 2nd-Century CE (John died approximately 70 years after Calvary), the Church itself was spiritually dead even though a great amount of activity occurred in the name of Christ Jesus.

John records Peter asking, “Lord, what about this man?” Jesus said to him, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!’ So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you’” (21:21–23) ... it was Jesus’ will that John live to both see in the end of the matter, recorded in the Book of Revelation, and to physically see the end of the Church; for with John’s physical death the Church was dead.

The first Eve believed the lie of the serpent when the serpent told her, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it [the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Gen 3:4–5), and the last Eve, the Christian Church, believed the lie of the old serpent, Satan the devil, when the Adversary told the Church, *You shall not surely die because Jesus promised His disciples that the gates of Hades would not prevail against the Church He built.*

If the Church is individually and collectively the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27), and if the body of Christ was crucified at Calvary, died on the cross, and was buried where it lay in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights—and if disciples, individually, are crucified with Christ, and buried with Christ in baptism, and raised to walk in a newness of life to be united with Him in a resurrection like His (Rom 6:1–6), then disciples collectively as the Body of Christ will die and be buried and raised after the third day, with this “third day” being the third day of the Genesis “P” creation account. More simply put, in order for the Church to be the Body of Christ, it must die as Christ’s body died, and it must hang visible on the cross for a while before being buried until it is resurrected after the third day.

The Body of Christ died with the death of John.

The dead Body hung visible for all the world to see until the Council of Nicea (ca 325 CE).

The Body will be returned to life at the second Passover liberation of Israel, an event soon to occur and the event that begins the seven endtime years of tribulation that result in the resurrection to glory of the firstfruits of the harvest of this earth.

Jesus saying that the gates of Hades would not prevail over the Church He built does not mean that the Church would not die, but that the Church would not stay dead just as the gates of Hades did not prevail over His earthly body even though He was dead and buried for three days and three nights. And the Church will not stay dead: the recovery or rebuilding of the Church as the temple of God began with the Radical Reformers.

The following is quoted from a soon to be e-published article, “The Tribulation and the Endurance”:

“Although claims were made by various 20th-Century Sabbatarian authors (notably Dugger and Dodd) to show a continuous history of Sabbath observance between the 1st-Century and the 19th-Century, these authors inevitably do not separate “Sabbatarians” from *Sabbatarians*, thus accepting any historical sect that self-identified itself as Sabbatarian as observers of the seventh day Sabbath whereas that is not the case: when enough of a written record is preserved to grasp the doctrines of Medieval Sabbatarians what’s found is that the sect kept Sunday in a strict manner as the sect imagined 1st-Century disciples had kept the Sabbath, imaging that the 1st-Century Church had kept Sunday as the Sabbath. Therefore, claims of Sabbath observance by any sect of Christendom prior to the 16th-Century must be viewed with skepticism, but not

necessarily rejected. Such claims should be quarantined until the sect is better understood, especially in the case of 15th-Century English Lollards, some of whom might well have been crypto-Sabbatarians as Michael Angelo might have been a crypto-Reformer in having Moses sitting upright before God while the pope reclined in a serpentine pose. But it isn't to concealed Sabbatarians or Reformers that endtime disciples look for the resurrected temple of God; rather, it is the visible ministries that strived to worship the Father and the Son as the 1st-Century sect of the Nazarenes had worshiped both that represents the return of life to the Christian Church. Life is not concealed in death, but comes from death as light comes from darkness.

“The first time the last Elijah stretched Himself over the dead Body of Christ occurred 1,200 years after the dead Body was delivered to the prince of this world for burial at the Council of Nicea (ca 325 CE), with life manifested visibly in the ministry of Andreas Fischer (1527/28–1540 CE), and his influence on isolated Unitarians until approximately 1600 CE.

“In 1527 CE, Oswalt Glaidt met Andreas Fischer and introduced Sabbath observance to Fischer. Unfortunately, while Fischer's ministry went forward, especially after he was hung and survived, Glaidt returned to Sunday observance where he became a disciple of Hans Hut—and from Fischer, whose teachings concerning the Trinity are obscure (deemphasized), comes a trail of visible Sabbatarian ministers and ministries that will culminate in the second Passover liberation of the Church from sin and death.

“The second time the last Elijah lays over prostrate Church slightly predates the Great Awakening and appears in this world in the form of 17th-Century Seventh Day Baptists in England and after 1671, in America, and on the continent after the 1675 publication of Spener's *Pia desideria*, which gave rise to the Pietist movement from which came 18th-Century German Seventh Day Baptists in America.

“The movement toward the restoration of the Christian Church has been a trek away from Babylon, the kingdom of this world ruled by the prince of this world, the present prince of the power of the air that reigns over all sons of disobedience (Eph 2:2–3). The Radical Reformers left Babylon, but of the Anabaptists that left early, only Fischer and for a while Glaidt crossed into God's rest, the Promised Land. Glaidt left spiritual Judea when he returned to Sunday observance, leaving only Fischer and his followers across a spiritual Jordan River—and they could not hold the territory that was rightfully theirs. They needed spiritual reinforcements, but these reinforcements didn't arrive in time to cause to the Body of Christ to breathe on its own; so the first attempt to return life to the Church died with the 16th-Century.

“But the second attempt followed almost immediately.

“It was, however, the Great Awakening that infused Spener's six proposals for restoring life to the Church into the Corpse of Christ. These proposals were: (1) Bible study in private meetings (*ecclesiolae in ecclesia*); (2) universal Christian priesthood; (3) Believers must practice as a sign and sacrament what they profess to believe; (4) tolerance and kind treatment should be extended to heterodox believers and unbelievers; (5) reform of theological training in universities; and (6) a different style of preaching.

“From the appearance of English Seventh Day Baptists and German Seventh Day Baptists in America at the beginning of the 18th-Century came the almost successful second attempt to bestow life in the Christian Church; for from Seventh Day Baptists came Seventh Day Adventists and the Church of God, Seventh Day, in the mid 19th

Century, and from the Oregon Conference of the Church of God, Seventh Day, came Herbert W. Armstrong's ministry that perhaps did more to promote Sabbath observance—and had more success—than any ministry since the last Elijah first stretched Himself over the Corpse.

“But—and this is a big caveat—Armstrong was also responsible for the failure of the Corpse to breathe on its own: Armstrong rejected universal Christian priesthood, the ministry of the laity, even though Paul writes that Christ gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to the Church for the purpose of equipping ‘the saints for the work of ministry’ (Eph 4:11–12). He rejected local autonomy of fellowships and established a centralized work patterned after the Roman Church. And finally, at a time when he knew he had prophecy wrong, through his son he rejected divine revelation in January 1962.

“With Armstrong's rejection of revelation, the second attempt to restore life to the Corpse ended—and there would be no third attempt patterned after the first two. The third attempt will be patterned after Israel's exodus from Egypt.

“Liberation from indwelling sin and death comes at the second Passover, and comes through filling every disciple (as if the disciple were a vessel) with spirit [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] so that there is no room within the disciple for lawlessness. And because the disciple will be *filled* with spirit, the Torah/Law will be written on hearts and placed in the minds of disciples: the first covenant, or Passover covenant made on the night that Israel left Egypt will finally have ended, and disciples will be under the long-awaited New Covenant.

“However, before the New Covenant can be implemented, death angels will again pass over all the land as the death angel Passover over all of Egypt. The lives of men will again be given as the ransom price of Israel (Isa 43:3–4)

“Disciples will not be liberated from indwelling sin and death until the second Passover of the year (the 14th/15th of Lyyar) so that those disciples who were spiritually defiled or who were on a long journey (i.e., not physically able to take the Passover) can cover themselves by drinking from the cup ... the second Passover occurs on the second Passover because it is the second Passover, a declarative statement sure to trip some.

“The filling of disciples with the spirit of God and the stripping away of grace to *reveal* these disciples will function as the last Eve [Zion] giving birth to a nation in a day (Isa 66:7–8), and will therefore produce a separation of disciples from the Father and the Son (although not a separation from Christ's love); for a man doesn't marry his body but marries his bride. A separation has to occur. And the liberation of Israel from indwelling sin means Israel will enter the Tribulation without indwelling sin, but also without the covering of grace, without being one with Christ Jesus. Disciples will enter the Tribulation being able to keep the commandments if that is what they desire, or able to return to sin if that is their desire. And if they return to sin, they will commit blasphemy against the spirit that fills them; for in a visualization of what occurs, they will have to reject or expel some of the spirit that fills them in order to take sin within themselves, with this rejection of the spirit being the blasphemy committed.

“The concept of Christians no longer being under grace and being separated from the Father and Son will be too much for most to accept, and will be one reason for the Rebellion of day 220.

It is simply not true that Jesus said that the Church (assembly of Him) would not die!! Just as John had to contend with Jesus having said, *If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you*, being interpreted to mean that he would not die before Christ returned, genuine endtime disciples have had to contend with Jesus having said, *I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*, being interpreted to mean that the Church would not die before Jesus returned. Same problem with disciples assuming as true what wasn't said: John saw the double end of the Church as the assembly of the Lord. He saw with his death, the Church die in the 1st-Century, and he saw the assembly of the Lord glorified at the end of the age (the fourth day of the "P" creation account) and the great harvest of this earth in the White Throne Judgment (on the sixth day of the "P" account). Likewise, the historic trace of genuine disciples remaining from the last Elijah's second attempt to return the breath of life into the Church saw/see in themselves the restoration of the Church and will see following the second Passover the corporate restoration of the Church.

This historic trace of disciples, like a trace of gold-bearing sand on a beach, have the task of preparing the way for the corporate restoration of the Church as John the Baptist prepared the way for Christ Jesus' ministry. And part of what must be recovered is knowledge about what the texture of Scripture conveys about the text: in Hebraic poetry, the dual presentation of an idea is readily seen and is used as the structure of the poetics, with the physical presentation coming first (1 Cor 15:46), and with the spiritual presentation of the same idea coming second, these dual presentations of the same idea forming thought-couplets that themselves are used as conjunction with other couplets to form sophisticated structures that are unattainable by phonetic rhyme schemes. But Greek with its case endings employs other schemes to convey the physical/spiritual correspondence seen in chirality, and the simplest of these other schemes is repetition of narrative.

When asked for a sign that He was from heaven, Jesus told the scribes and the Pharisees that He would give only one sign, the sign of Jonah, and He said that as Jonah was three days and three nights in belly of the great fish, the Son of Man would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matt 12:39–40). Jesus then spoke of the men of Nineveh repenting at the preaching of Jonah.

(Note: as the Church is individually and collectively the Body of Christ — 1 Cor 12:27 — the Church is also the Body of the Son of Man, and what happens to the Head will also happen to the Body).

Jesus was again asked for a sign, and this second time He spoke of the Pharisees and Sadducees being able to read the appearance of the sky, but not the signs of the time. And He repeated what He said about no sign would be given but the sign of Jonah.

The first time the sign of Jonah is mentioned, it precedes a comparison of Nineveh repenting upon hearing the preaching of Jonah but Israel not repenting when hearing someone greater than Jonah ... Jesus forms the right hand enantiomer of Jonah, with the story of Jonah being swallowed by the great fish, going down to Sheol, then being returned to life, spewed forth as a spokesman for God (Nineveh also worship Dagon, the Philistine fish god), and the men of Nineveh repenting upon hearing his preaching forming the left hand enantiomer of the story of Jesus dying on the cross, being buried in the heart of the earth, being resurrected to life, but the men of Israel (post resurrection) not repenting when hearing His words.

Think about the above for a moment. Jesus introduced the idea of the men of Israel not repenting upon hearing His words forming the reversed image of the men of Nineveh repenting, and endtime disciples have—as in the case of what Jesus said to John about remaining alive and as in the case of what Jesus said about the gates of Hades not prevailing—somewhat carelessly assumed that only the Sadducees and Pharisees of Jesus’ day were the analogous generation, neglecting the implication of what Jesus said about the queen of the South, with this queen forming the shadow and copy of the Church: in order for Jonah to be the chiral image of Jesus, which he is, then it is the Church as men of Israel (the nation now circumcised of heart) that needs to repent at the preaching of Jesus. But this *Church* will first be like the generation of Israel that will be condemned, the generation of Israel that left Egypt but did not enter into the Promised Land because of unbelief. It is the children of this generation that will be like the queen of the South; it is the children of the generation that rejected Jesus’ words that will, by believing His words, condemn their fathers for their unbelief. The children of Israel followed Joshua (in Greek, Ἰησοῦ — from Acts 7:45) into the Promised Land as the 144,000 (Rev 7:4; 14:1–5) and the great multitude (Rev 7:9–14) that is the third part of humankind (Zech 13:9) will follow Jesus (in Greek, Ἰησοῦ — from Acts 4:10) into salvation. Whereas the generation that left Egypt did not enter into God’s rest, the offspring or children of that generation does. So the men of Nineveh that repented upon hearing the preaching of Jonah form the shadow and type of the children of Israel, the 144,000 and the great multitude that enters into God’s rest, which now gives meaning to the ending of Jonah’s narrative, a subject of another Sabbath reading.

The generation of Israel that did not accept Jesus as the men of Nineveh accepted Jonah as a spokesman for God forms the shadow and type of the Christian Church—and its fate is found in what happened to Nineveh when after 150 years the city-state returned to its former ways and was destroyed, and in what happen to the natural nation of Israel itself.

Therefore, the first time Jesus mentions the sign of Jonah, the mentioning of the sign occupies the natural or physical position in a Hebraic thought-couplet; whereas the second time the sign of Jonah is mentioned, introduction of the sign follows a physical sign that is context specific, meaning that the same sign (red sky) indicates fair weather when seen going into darkness but means trouble when seen going into light—one sign with opposing meanings, each meaning dependent upon the context in which the sign is seen. And bringing the sign of Jonah into this context, the sign of Jonah acquires by association two meanings, each context specific.

The body/Body of Christ is both the earthly body of Jesus of Nazareth and is the Christian Church. Thus, as the red sky is a context specific sign, differing in meaning when seen at night versus when seen at dawn, the sign of Jonah is a context specific sign, differing in meaning when seen going into the darkness of the one long night that began at Calvary from its meaning when seen at dawn when the Church is restored following the second Passover. The sign of Jonah going into darkness pertains to the earthly body of Christ; whereas the sign of Jonah pertaining to the spiritual Body equates to the stormy and threatening day that a red sky portends when seen at dawn, with this threatening day represented in the seven endtime years of tribulation.

The physical/spiritual pattern of Hebraic poetry is present in both times the sign of Jonah is introduced: in Matthew 12:38–42, the equivalent to the physical presentation of an ideal in a Hebraic thought-couplet is the chiral relationship between the prophet

Jonah being in the belly of the great fish and Jesus being in the heart of the earth, each being in a state of death for three days and three nights and each “resurrected” as a spokesman for God. The spiritual equivalent is the repentance of Nineveh when hearing the words of a spokesman for God although most likely Nineveh assumed that Jonah spoke for Dagon, the fish god.

The second mention of the sign of Jonah continues through the movement of breath from the front of the face to in back of the head or to where a whale breathes ... aspiration is moved from in front of the nasal consonant “n” as seen in “John,” where the “h” represents aspiration, to in back of the nasal consonant as in “Jonah,” for by birth of water Peter is not the son of Jonah but the son of John. Only by being born of spirit does Peter receive a second breath of life [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], with this breath of life entering him where the dove landed on Jesus. And the Church that Jesus built is built on the movement of breath from in front of the face as seen in the exhaled breath in pronouncing Πέτρος (*Petros*) to the inner self as seen in the inhaled breath in pronouncing the last syllable of πέτρα (*petra*). The old man or self that is made alive by human breath is seen in the exhaled breath when pronouncing /pe/ and /petros/ while the new man or self that is a son of God born of spirit is represented in the inhalation necessary when pronouncing /tra/ in *petra*. And English translators, because that have not been born of spirit, have missed the significance of what Jesus said, the significance of this movement of aspiration from exhaling to inhaling and from in front of the nose to behind the nose.

The significance of the above is that in Greek narrative the same physical/spiritual pattern seen in Hebraic thought-couplets is disclosed in repetition of narrative—and a person is finally ready to “read” John chapter 6. Remember John writes his gospel late in life (about 90 CE) and he writes as the disciple whom Jesus loved, the one to whom Jesus gave more knowledge than to any of the others. So it is through John that the epistles of Paul need to be read. When doing so, what’s seen is absolute consistency of thought.

The feeding of the five thousand forms the chiral image of taking the Passover sacraments of bread and wine on the night that Jesus was betrayed; the barley loaves are made from the harvest of firstfruits and become a type of the two barley loaves baked with leaven that are waved by the high priest on Pentecost (Lev 23:15–21). The fish become a type of eating the body and blood of Christ.

Why five thousand or four thousand or three thousand—the numbers have significance but not for disciples today. Until disciples enter into the Tribulation, they are merely large numbers; for whatever significance that will be assigned to them will be an assignment made by men and not of God. Thus, leaving the meaning of the actual number who ate unresolved, the important aspect of the five thousand is what Jesus said to them when they followed Him to the other side of the sea, over which Jesus walked ... Israel followed Moses across the Sea of Reeds by walking on dry land, but neither Moses nor Israel were born of spirit. Therefore, passing from this side of death to the other side—the Flood of Noah’s day was the baptism of the world into death—comes by following Moses, for death reigned from Adam to Moses. And following Moses means believing his writings for in his writings he wrote of Jesus (John 5:46–47).

The person who believes Moses’ writings will keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord.

Therefore, the person who does not believe Moses' writings and by extension does not keep the commandments is also unable to hear Jesus' words, let alone believe words the person didn't hear.

Jesus walking on water forms the representation of being born of spirit, and born empowered by or filled with spirit. The person able to walk on water (either by following Moses and walking on dry land with the waters parted on either side of the person or by walking atop the water as those will who follow the Lamb wherever He goes) escapes from death.

Jesus' disciples form a special case:

When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened. But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." *Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.* (John 6:16–21 emphasis added)

Because Jesus was in the boat with His disciples, the boat was immediately propelled to the other side.

But the crowds that ate of the loaves and fishes didn't know that Jesus had left until the following day when the one boat was still there but there was no Jesus ... the lawless Christian Church didn't know that Jesus had left it to its devices by the beginning of the 2nd-Century, but will hurry across "death" once restored to life and will ask, "Rabbi, when did you come here" (John 6:25), with "here" being the Galilee of the Gentiles that is in Judea and where all live as Judeans. Symbolically, the crowd represents the restored Church at the first of the Tribulation—and all that Jesus says to the crowd and that the crowd answers Jesus is what will be said during the first 220 days of the Tribulation so that when the crowd turned away from Jesus and even many of His disciples turned back (v. 66) and figuratively returned to Egypt as the generation that left Egypt wanted to return to Egypt (Num 14:1–4) has as its reality the Rebellion of day 220 in the Tribulation.

But—and here is the key—no one can come to Jesus unless the Father draws the person (John 6:44); no one can come to Jesus unless the Father grants the person permission (v. 65). Salvation as one of the firstfruits is not open to everyone, but to only those whom the Father draws and whom Jesus calls.

The offer of salvation as one of the firstfruits being restricted to those whom the Father draws is an extremely anti-democratic teaching, but is the right hand enantiomer of Satan's use of democracy to foster rebellion against the Most High. And this thought will be continued next week.

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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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