

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 the temple.

## Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of May 30, 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 1 Corinthians chapter 3.*

**Commentary:** Paul tells the saints at Corinth that he could not address them as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh; that he did not “feed” them solid food but milk. Paul goes on to say that these same saints were still not ready for solid food—and what Paul gives to the saints at Corinth in his first recorded epistle is spiritual milk.

In feeding the saints at Corinth *milk*, Paul uses the word γάλα—*gala* (milk) as a metaphor for the most elementary aspects of Christian doctrine.

The writer of Hebrews says, “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk [γάλακτος], not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child” (5:12).

Jesus asked Nicodemus, “Are you a teacher of Israel and yet do not understand these things [being born of spirit—πνεῦμα]? ... If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” (John 3:10, 12). And the answer is that Nicodemus couldn't, nor could most who followed Jesus since; for Paul writes to Timothy, “You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me” (2 Tim 1:15), and not much has changed in two millennia.

A reality that must be addressed is that Christians, Sabbatarian and otherwise, are today spiritual infants, unskilled in the word of righteousness, unable to comprehend what it means to be born of spirit [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], and unwilling to believe God when believing God causes them to abandon their most cherished perceptions of what Scripture says. With very few exceptions—as few as existed in Asia Minor at the end of Paul's ministry—*Christians* simply will not believe that visible, physical things in this world, including those things that Moses wrote, form the shadow and copy of the invisible things of God.

The above needs repeated: unless a disciple truly understands what it means to be born of spirit and circumcised of heart, with ancient Israel individually and as a nation forming the shadow and copy of Christ Jesus' disciples, and with the temple built of dead stone forming the shadow and copy of the temple built of living stones (1 Pet 2:4–5), and with the Sabbath forming the shadow and type of the inner new self entering into God's presence, the *Christian* is unskilled in the word of righteousness, is a spiritual infant, and ought to keep his or her mouth shut while learning the rudimentary principles of God.

But we don't see spiritual infants quietly learning the ways of righteousness: we see those who are unskilled in the word of righteousness setting themselves up as teachers and even apostles, going forth into the word as if they have been sent by God to add further confusion to an already confused world.

The relationship between the physical shadow and the spiritual reality is seen in Jesus saying that murder committed with the hand becomes anger held in the heart, and adultery committed with the body becomes lust held in the mind ... when the commandments of God (the ten living words) were written on two tablets of stone, they were a schoolmaster that "taught" the hand and body of a physically circumcised Israelite what he (or she) should do, but when these same commandments are written on hearts and placed in minds, they teach the inner new self that has been born of spirit as a son of God what it means to love God and to love neighbor. What the hand and what the body will do logically follows the desires of the heart and the thoughts of the mind; so the words of Moses that pertain to the hands and bodies of physically circumcised Israel do not pertain directly to the fleshly hands and bodies of *Christians* but form the shadow and copy of what has been written on hearts and placed in minds through receipt of *the spirit of the truth* [τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας], the Comforter [παράκλητον], that the world (including ancient Israel) is not and was not able to receive. This Paul understood, but Paul was not able to well convey what he understood to many. Even today, what Paul understood cannot be conveyed to those able to only ingest spiritual milk.

Moses said to sacrifice a bleating lamb on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib at even, but Jesus as the chosen Lamb of God told His disciples to eat His flesh and to drink His blood (John 6:53–56), that His disciples were to eat the blessed bread that was His body and to drink from the blessed cup that was His blood poured out for the forgiveness of sin on the dark portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib, the night that he was betrayed (Matt 26:26–28; 1 Cor 11:23–26). So in moving from what Moses commands physically circumcised Israel to do concerning the Passover to what Jesus commands His disciples to do, a bleating lamb becomes bread and wine taken on one night of the year. A bleating lamb is a bleating lamb and can be eaten every night of the year if enough lambs are available to the one who eats, but a bleating lamb, a male without blemish and of the first year, chosen and penned on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Abib and then sacrificed on the 14<sup>th</sup> at even, is the Passover offering that serves as a memorial to death angels passing over Israel while the nation was in Egypt. This chosen lamb is not a shank bone or a chicken neck, but a real bleating lamb. But this lamb is only a type and shadow of the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus, and as every bleating lamb is not a shadow of Christ, bread and wine eaten and drunk on nights other than the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib or even

eaten and drunk on the 14<sup>th</sup> but not blessed by prayer does not represent the body and blood of Christ.

Why isn't Moses' command to sacrifice a bleating lamb as the Passover offering observed by *Christians* today? Is it because *Christians* place greater authority in Jesus' words than in Moses'; yet if a person will not believe the writings of Moses, the person will not believe the words of Jesus (John 5:46–47). But Moses recorded the shadow of a reality that came in the form of Christ Jesus—and the shadow is not the reality! However, if the shadow keeps the Passover, the reality will also keep the Passover but not necessarily how the shadow keeps it. Likewise, if the shadow keeps the Sabbath, the reality will also keep the Sabbath but not necessarily how the shadow keeps it. Jesus said that “the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:28), thereby making the Sabbath a servant or serf of the Son of Man: the Sabbath is to serve the Son of Man, for the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (v. 27). The Passover serves man, for until the New Covenant is implemented forgiveness of sin comes by drinking from the blessed cup on the night that Jesus was betrayed. Forgiveness doesn't come any way other than through death, the disciple's or Christ Jesus'. And the Sabbath serves not through many rules and regulations, but by the body [σῶμα] resting so that the inner new self can bring the desires of the heart and the thoughts of the mind to God without the distraction of having to gather to the person those things necessary to sustain life.

Moses' command to sacrifice a bleating lamb on the Passover isn't observed by rabbinical Judaism today for there is the matter of the destruction of the visible temple; yet rabbinical Judaism keeps Moses' words about not kindling a fire on the Sabbath (Ex 35:3). Rabbinical Judaism goes to great extremes not to boil [cook] a kid in its mother's milk (Ex 23:19; 34:26). It practices many washings of hands, but it acts without understanding. It rejects the authority of Christ Jesus; it rejects the word of righteousness. But for some reason many Christians look to rabbinical Judaism for when to eat the Passover and for how to keep the Sabbath.

After Israel's rebellion at Sinai in the golden calf incident, Moses returns to the mountain, receives a second covenant, comes down, and tells Israel, “These are the things that the Lord has commanded you to do. Six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. You shall kindle no fire in all your dwelling places on the Sabbath day” (Ex 35:2–3) ... pause for a minute and consider the context: Israel has just rebelled against the Lord, making for itself (actually, having Aaron make for the nation) a golden calf by shaping a wax image, investing it, melting out the wax, melting the gold and pouring the molten metal into the mold. How important was fire in the casting of this molded calf? And how brightly did Moses face shine (Ex 34:29). On the Sabbath, these rebellious Israelites were not to kindle a fire because they were to enter into the “shine” or light that came from Moses, about whom they had said, “As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him” (Ex 32:1) when the people commanded Aaron to make for them gods [*elohim*] to go before them.

As long as Israel kindles no fire on the Sabbath, the nation remembers (or should remember) its rebellion against God at Mount Sinai. But circumcised of heart Israel didn't rebel against God on Mount Sinai and has no need to remember the rebellion of its spiritually lifeless shadow—

Paul writes,

Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory. Indeed, in this case, what once had glory has come to have no glory at all, because of the glory that surpasses it. For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory.

Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. (2 Cor 3:7–17)

The glory that shone from Moses' face is directly related to the command not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath day ... when the command was given Israel was made to serve the Sabbath. Consider where Israel was when the command was given and the season of the year: Israel was dwelling in tents in the Sinai, a hot area of the world. But what happens when Israel is dispersed from the Promised Land and finds itself in northern Europe: the command not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath becomes a burden, for during the cold winter months, someone has to rise many times during the night portion of the Sabbath to keep the fire going so that the house stays above freezing inside. The person serves the Sabbath, which Judaism modifies by beginning it at a fixed hour rather than at sunset—rabbinical Judaism will amend the beginning hour of the Sabbath, working after sunset on the sixth day because of perceived necessity when living in northern latitudes, but it will not kindle a fire to warm a cold house but will bundle up and shiver during the Sabbath.

Truly there is freedom in Christ Jesus ... not freedom to ignore the Sabbath as most of Christendom does, but freedom to treat the Sabbath as a servant created by the Lord to serve the needs of the Son of Man. And it is awareness of such concepts that separates milk drinkers from disciples able to ingest solid food.

Those things that the Lord through Moses commanded physically circumcised Israel to do form the shadow and type of those things that disciples born of spirit will do out of love for God and neighbor. Out of love for God, disciples will keep the Sabbath (which is the seventh day, not the eighth day) and will use the freedom they have to sleep through the night without getting up and stoking a fire so that it doesn't go out before morning. But these same disciples will begin

the Sabbath at sunset, not at 5:30 pm, or 6:00 pm. And if sunset in December comes at 2:30 Friday afternoon as it does in much of Alaska, then the Sabbath begins at 2:30 ... what about the person who will lose his or her job because the person can't get off work Friday afternoon? Should not the Sabbath serve this person by beginning at, say, 6:00 pm? Or what about the hospital worker whose shift requires that the person work on the Sabbath? Should the Sabbath not serve this person also?

The Sabbath begins at sunset at the end of the sixth day of the week: the Sabbath was not made by man, but made to serve man. And because the Sabbath wasn't made by man, human beings do not have the option to alter it or to declare it to be another day of the week. What human beings have is the option to observe it or not observe it. How it is observed, though, does change when Christ Jesus replaced Moses as the mediator of the second covenant, just as how the Passover is observed changed. And this change is centered by the movement from Israel serving the Sabbath to the Sabbath serving Israel, the nation circumcised of heart.

In the wilderness, physically circumcised Israel received manna that was to be gathered six days of a week, but not on the Sabbath, with this manna being a shadow and copy of Christ Jesus, the true bread that has come down from heaven (John chap 6). For six days of a week, Israel was to gather manna, grind it in hand mills or beat it in mortars, boil it in pots and make cakes from it (Num 11:8) ... do disciples gather Christ Jesus to themselves for six days of a week, grind Him in hand mills or beat Him in mortars, boil Him and make cakes of Him, with enough of Him gathered on the sixth day that there is no need to gather more of Him on the Sabbath? Of course not! So why would a disciple use what is written about gathering, preparing, and cooking manna as the disciple's model for cooking on the Sabbath—the analogy has no validity, especially when the disciple realizes that Jesus is the bread of life, and a disciple eats of this bread annually on the Passover and daily when coming before God in prayer. Is a disciple not to pray on the Sabbath when the disciple comes before God? Is the disciple not to observe the Passover if it happens to fall on the weekly Sabbath? Or is it simply wrongheaded to use manna, a type of Christ, as an example of what a disciple should or should not do on the Sabbath?

It is the gathering of manna, the gathering of sticks (Num 15:32–36) that an Israelite was not to do; for manna comes before Israel is told not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath. It is “gathering” the things of this world needed to sustain physical life that a person is not to do on the Sabbath, which “serves” man by causing man to rest from his (or her) gathering. There is no obligation to shiver or to fast on the Sabbath. Disciples have the freedom to do those things that make their resting from gathering reasonably comfortable on the Sabbath; for the Sabbath allows the disciple time to focus mind and heart upon the things of God, and no one can focus on God when shivering uncontrollably because the stove in the person's cabin went out during a cold winter night that isn't twelve hours long but sixteen or more. Christians are not called to die on the Sabbath from hypothermia. They are called, however, to rest from their gathering on the Sabbath so that they can focus on God.

It is easy to add to the text, inserting “cooking” in the place of “kindling,” or inserting *Christian* in the place of physically circumcised Israel ... what pertained to physically circumcised Israel pertains to the circumcised of heart new creature that dwells in a tent of flesh, with this tent of flesh needing daily maintenance of some sort.

The Circumcision Faction opposed Paul throughout his ministry, and the Circumcision Faction had Scripture on its side. At the Jerusalem Conference (Acts chap 15), the Circumcision Faction thought to convince other disciples that Paul and Barnabas had it wrong, but the issue wasn't circumcision or keeping all that Moses commanded but causing offense and putting a stumbling block before converts. For Jews, a cause of offense was an uncircumcised person entering the temple; hence, immediately after the conference Paul had Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3) so that he could take Timothy into synagogues without offending potential Jewish converts. But for Gentiles, circumcision as adults was a stumbling block that prevented some from coming to Christ; so while both Paul and Peter taught Gentile converts to live as Jews (Gal 2:14), neither had these converts circumcise the flesh—for Israel was no longer a nation circumcised in the flesh, but the nation that was not before a people (1 Pet 2:9–10), the nation that was circumcised of heart (Rom 2:28–29). Therefore, despite the Circumcision Faction having the weight of the Law and the Prophets on its side, it was unskilled in the word of righteousness as is all today who would have Christians keep to the letter the words of Moses ... again, the words of Moses don't go away; they are not abolished; but they pertain to the shadow of the reality that is Christ.

Sabbatarian disciples are usually careful not to transgress the words of Moses, choosing to err on the side of Moses rather than to fall into the pit of Evangelical or Catholic Christendom, both of whom have neglected Moses and welded Greek paganism to the oracles of God. Some disciples today challenge Paul as the Circumcision Faction did—and they are as without understanding as were those disciples that left Paul in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century.

Human beings are, with very few exceptions, the only mammals that drink milk as adults ... remember, the visible things of this world reveal the hidden things of God (Rom 1:20), and physically drinking milk as an adult does suggest the state of natural and spiritual Israel's relationship with God, with rabbinical Judaism careful not to mix milk (dairy) with meat, taking “You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk” (Ex 34:26) to the extreme example of not even using the same dishes and cookware for dairy as are used for meat. And indeed, rabbinical Judaism eats no spiritual meat, but lives in the shadows, digesting these shadows as if they had substance, whereas Christendom lives on milk as if it were a calf slated to be butchered as veal.

Does Christ Jesus give disciples the freedom to eat a cheeseburger ... if eating a cheeseburger were to cause one weak in faith to stumble, the person who eats has placed a stumbling block before another disciple, something that ought not to be done (Rom 14:13); for the kingdom of heaven is not of food or drink. Likewise, if by kindling a fire on the Sabbath the person causes a brother to stumble, then the person ought to shiver for the day. If eating in a restaurant on the Sabbath were to cause a brother to stumble, then the person who hungers should fast for

the day, sacrificing the liberty that the disciple has in making the Sabbath his or her servant for the sake of the disciple's brother.

Grace has not been rightly understood by Christendom since all of Asia left Paul; for Christians have not understood spiritual birth as receiving a second breath of life, with this second breath coming from the Father and needing its unbelief covered by the garment of Christ's righteousness. Whereas Jesus' death at Calvary was the reality of every animal sacrificed by Israel so that *in this present age* (the necessary qualifier) Israel will never again need animal sacrifices to cover its lawlessness or unbelief in this world—animal sacrifices as well as physical circumcision return when this present age is replaced by the age to come, the age ruled by the Son of Man—Jesus' sacrifice as the Lamb of God "covers" but does not pay the righteous requirement of the law for the unbelief of inner new selves that are born of spirit (i.e., given life through receiving the breath of God, πνεῦμα θεοῦ). ... Flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom (1 Cor 15:50), and the Moab covenant by which Israel could have "inherited" everlasting life through demonstrated obedience by faith (*cf.* Deut 30:1–2, 6, 11–20; Rom 9:31–10:8) has a new mediator and better promises, with the foremost of these better promises being that disciples of Christ Jesus are actually born of spirit prior to demonstrated obedience and as infants sons of God learn to walk uprightly before God under the "covering" of Christ Jesus' righteousness.

Jesus represents both goats that are Israel's sin offering on *Yom Kipporim*. The death of the only Son of *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος] equates to the goat sacrificed on the altar (Lev 16:9), but Jesus as the Passover Lamb of God equates to the *Azazel* goat, in that He now bears in the heavenly realm the sins of Israel that have been read over Him ... the heavenly realm is the "land" on the other side of the precipice represented in the linguistic icon *azazel*. The *Azazel* goat is not supposed to be killed—when ancient Israel began to cast the *Azazel* over a cliff (it wasn't fitting to have an *Azazel* wander back into Jerusalem), the nation separated itself from salvation through its lack of understanding. And for rabbinical Judaism today to claim that the priests and scholars of the second temple were excellent readers of the text discloses how little knowledge the teachers of natural Israel had then and have now.

The significance of Calvary is that the death penalty for the lawlessness or unbelief of the flesh has been paid in this world. Death is not now the permanent state of the dead, an oxymoron for those not of Israel; for the Creator of everything that has been made died in the flesh to put an end to death. But a thing is not established except by the testimony of two or three witnesses; hence, it will be by the resurrection of the two witnesses from death (Rev 11:11) that the "death" of Death (*ca.* Dan 7:11–12; Rev 6:7–8) is confirmed and becomes a matter of "fact" ... the "testimony" of the two witnesses is their resurrection. Their use of the power of God to call plagues upon the earth whenever and wherever they desire is not their testimony but the events that cause them to be noticed so that "those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over" their deaths (Rev 11:10). Their testimony will include what they say and what they prophesy, but it is their resurrection that provides evidence that Death, the fourth horseman, has been defeated. Thus, the most important part of their testimony isn't what they say but what God does when a loud voice from heaven says, "Come up here!" (v. 12).

- With the *death* of Death comes the end of the sons of Adam dying from internal causes;
- Although the sons of Adam remains mortal and can be killed by “outside” causes (i.e., martyred), human beings will have been baptized into life as the air-breathing world was baptized into death in the days of Noah;
- Thus human beings shall be saved by enduring to the end (Matt 24:13; 10:22), for every person will be “filled” with spirit and will no longer have indwelling sin. No person will die from so-called “natural” causes.

Under the New Covenant, sins will be forgiven—and where there is no remembrance of sin there is no death, for there is no longer any offering for sin (Heb 10:18). Death is the only acceptable offering for unbelief that inevitably becomes disobedience ... when there is no remembrance of sin, no person will need the covering of Christ Jesus’ righteousness, for all will have the Law [Torah] written on hearts and minds. Grace will have ended.

But, and here is the caveat that was not understood in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century, the New Covenant has not yet been implemented. The writer of Hebrews says, “In speaking of a new covenant, he [the Lord] makes the first one obsolete. And *what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away*” (8:13 emphasis added). But what is becoming obsolete and what is ready to vanish away is neither yet obsolete nor has yet vanished away ... the New Covenant has not yet been implemented, for the covenant made on the night that the Lord took the fathers of Israel by the hand to lead this nation out from Egypt (i.e., the Passover covenant) has not yet vanished away. All of Israel does not today *Know the Lord*, a central provision of the New Covenant that comes from writing the Torah on the hearts and putting it within all of Israel so that there is no need for Christian ministry.

The relationship between physical circumcision and circumcision of the heart (spiritual circumcision) is the relationship between murder and anger; between adultery and lust; between Israel in Egypt sacrificing a bleating lamb as its Passover offering on the dark portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib and disciples taking the sacraments of bread and wine on the dark portion of the 14<sup>th</sup>. The relationship goes from pertaining to the flesh to pertaining to the new creature born as a son of God; the relationship goes being under the tutorage of the Law to having the Law placed inside the person, written on heart and mind. Therefore, the Torah serves not an exact delineation of what can be done or not done on the Sabbath (such as lighting a fire) but as a shadow and copy of what it means to enter into the presence of God ... no person when in the presence of the Father and the Son would gather to him or herself the things of this world; for all such gathering would be placing more importance on the things that have been made than upon the One who made all things, or upon the One who commanded that all things be made.

The first temple was a thing made by the hands of Israel, a house built for God (1 Chron 17:12) in which He would dwell one day a year: on *Yom Kipporim*. The second temple began as a thing made by human hands, but became the work of God when, after three days [the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, & 17<sup>th</sup> of Abib in the year 3791], the Father raised up the destroyed temple in the form of the resurrected Christ Jesus



(John 2:19). And it is in this resurrected second temple that the Father and the Son will dwell forever (Rev 21:22) ... note, the second temple didn't begin as the visible Body of Christ: under Zerubbabel, it never housed the Ark of the Covenant or the Urim and Thummim; it was the angel Gabriel that spoke to Zechariah (Luke 1:5–23) in the temple, not the Lord—there is no indication in Scripture that the Lord was ever present in the second temple until Jesus entered it, just as human beings have no indwelling eternal life except as the gift of God in “Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23). But when born of spirit [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] the previously lifeless tent of flesh [σῶμα] becomes like the second temple when Jesus was in the temple.

Jesus entering Herod's temple and teaching within its walls and on its porches is analogous to the spirit of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ] dwelling within the fleshly body of a disciple. The juxtaposition of the visible Jesus inside the visible temple with the invisible spirit of Christ dwelling within the invisible inner new self bears the same visible to invisible relationship that murder committed with the hand versus anger hidden in a person's heart has one to the other, or that a bleating Passover lamb has with blessed bread and wine representing the body and blood of the Lamb of God.

If a person cannot grasp the juxtaposition between the visible and outwardly circumcised Israelite entering into a visible temple constructed of wood and stone and the invisible and inwardly circumcised new self that has been born of the divine breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] dwelling within a tent of flesh, the person cannot truly understand Scripture: Paul wrote, “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing” (2 Cor 4:3) ... those who are perishing are all those who have sampled the goodness of God, but who now have their minds blinded, with their blindness causing them to either return to the ways of this world and its *Christendom*, or to embrace the veil that remains unlifted over Judaism.

For example, Sabbath observance as delineated by Moses forms a shadow and copy of entering into the presence of God, but is no more the reality of entering into God's presence than a bleating lamb is the reality of the Lamb of God. Again, Jesus said that the “Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27), but for those whose minds are veiled, the Sabbath is either to be kept as Judaism keeps the Sabbath (i.e., making man subject to the Sabbath), or is to be ignored and another day substituted for the Sabbath (an abolishing of the Sabbath). Neither is of God. Jesus' declaration that “the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath” (v. 28) must be understood in the context that disciples as the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27) and as the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16) are also the Body of the Son of Man, who is lord over the Sabbath.

The Sabbath is subject to disciples, not to be abolished by disciples, but subject as a serf was to his (or her) lord: the serf is not “abolished” when his lord is present, but does the bidding of the lord. Thus, the Sabbath exists to serve disciples, not to hinder disciples ... as Jesus' disciples did not fast because the Bridegroom was present, one of Jesus' disciples does not shiver when it is 40 below outside on the Sabbath because a command exists not to light a fire. Jesus' disciples do not huddle under blankets and quilts for all of the hours between when the stove heating the cabin in which the disciple dwells on Alaska's Kenai

Peninsula burns itself out and when the Sabbath ends. No, the disciple gets up—because there is no one else there to get up—and with frost a quarter of an inch thick on the cabin’s window panes, the disciple kindles a fire and warms the cabin, and opens his Bible to read the words of the Lord as the inner new self [i.e., the inner son of God] drags the tent of flesh in which it dwells into God’s presence. The disciple is not under bondage, fearful of striking a match, fearful of profaning the Sabbath by not getting up three times during the night to stoke the fire. No, the disciple was resting from his mundane labors of falling timber and bringing home the bug-killed spruce for firewood; the disciple was resting from gathering the sticks necessary to keep the disciple alive.

No disciple is under obligation to read Scripture while wearing padded pants, a parka, and with heavy mittens on hands inside a cabin because the stove burned itself out during the night. The disciple has the liberty to kindle a fire, make fresh coffee, and to sit at a table in shirt sleeves, and the Sabbath isn’t profaned because a match was struck. The Sabbath would be profaned if it was ignored and logging continued on the Sabbath as it did on the other six days a week.

But disciples in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century and ever since have abused the liberty they have of making the Sabbath their servant. This abuse is easily seen:

And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.” And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. And he said to them, “Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) And he said, “What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.” (Mark 7:14–23)

What about Jesus declaring all foods clean? Is that what He really said? Or did He say, as Mark records, Οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀσύνετοί ἐστε [*Thus also you undiscerning are*]; οὐ νοεῖτε ὅτι πᾶν τὸ ἔξωθεν εἰσπορευόμενον εἰς τὸν ἄνθρωπον [*not perceive you that all that from outside the man*] οὐ δύναται αὐτὸν κοινῶσαι [*not able him to defile*] ὅτι οὐκ εἰσπορεύεται αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν καρδίαν [*because not it does enter of him into the heart*] ἀλλ εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν [*but into the stomach*], καὶ εἰς τὸν ἀφεδρῶνα [*and into the latrine*] ἐκπορεύεται, καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα [*goes out, cleansing all the foods*] (7:18–19).

Jesus didn’t declare all foods clean, but said that when a food is returned to the earth as excrement it is cleansed as death (the person returned to dust) cleanses all persons. It isn’t a person’s bowel movement that defiles a person, but the thoughts of the mind and the desires of the heart. And He said that those Pharisees who were overly concerned about the washing of hands were defiled by

their deeds that came from the desires of their hearts; that these same Pharisees were without discernment (spiritual understanding).

Christendom uses and has used the liberty it has to misread and mistranslate and misteach Scripture just as Pharisees used the concept of *Corban* (Mark 7:11) to negate the word of God. That ought not to be. It should never have happened, but it has and now we must address the theologically radioactive fallout ... it does take long exposure to error, either that of rabbinical Judaism or that of Catholic Christendom, to disfigure the disciple and eventually kill the inner new self. Such exposure cannot be prevented, and the person poisoned by the theological radiation cannot really be helped. No disciple can save another, but the effort must be made to try.

Each person must work out his or her own salvation—and once a Christian has been poisoned by either the lawlessness of Evangelical/Catholic Christendom or by the legalism of messianic Judaism/Christianity, the disciple dies rather quickly. No good antidote exists; for having tasted of the goodness of God, the disciple cannot be easily renewed to faith when the disciple willingly wanders among the shades that haunt the dry arroyos and alkali flats of unbelief ... Jesus said that the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath (again Mark 2:28). A disciple will either believe the statement is true, or the disciple won't. The disciple will either believe that individually and collectively disciples are the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27), or the disciple won't. The disciple will either believe that as the Body of Christ disciples are individually and collectively the Body of the Son of Man or the disciple won't. The disciple will either believe that as the Body of the Son of Man the disciple is lord over the Sabbath, or the disciple won't ... can you hear the objections? *No disciple is lord of the Sabbath*. Oh, why are disciples fearful to say that the Sabbath exists to serve them?

The *Christian* who is afraid to strike a match on the Sabbath is as the Pharisees were; whereas the “Christian” who ignores the Sabbath, transforming the Sabbath into the busiest shopping day of the week, is as Gentiles were. Neither is where the Christian should be, using the Sabbath as a servant ordained from the foundation of the world to serve the Son of Man, Head and Body.

If a disciple is invited into another person's home and is served a pork chop, meat that is as repulsive to most Sabbath Christians as a cheeseburger is to an Observant Jew, will the disciple offend the other person by refusing to eat, or will the person not make an issue of what is served unless the one serving the pork chop introduces the issue of the meat. Then for the sake of the one serving the pork chop, the disciple will decline to continue eating ... the few bites of unclean meat will not defile the person; though the mind lusting for a pork chop, whether one is actually eaten or not, will defile the person.

The laws concerning clean and unclean meats move from defilement coming by what enters the mouth to defilement coming by what the mind wants to eat or not eat. If the mind is repulsed by the prospect of eating clams, shrimp, lobster, pig, snails, and a host of other “common” meats, then the body will never eat these meats of its own accord. The Christian will eat only clean meats. However, if this Christian—so as not to cause offense—does eat a bite of a pork chop, this Christian is not defiled before the Lord. This Christian will not suddenly die; this Christian is not condemned to the lake of fire. But rather, what has been eaten

leaves the person in a bowel movement and is cleansed by being buried in the earth (or however the sewage is handled).

The understanding that has been missing from Christendom is that the disciple is not the body of flesh, but the inner new self that is a son of God born of the breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ]. The disciple does no cooking on the Sabbath; nor does the disciple kindle a fire. The disciple is not able to do either. It is the tent of flesh in which this disciple dwells that kindles a fire so that the tent of flesh doesn't freeze during the Sabbath day. And Christ gave to His disciples the liberty to make the Sabbath a delight and not a burden.

But if a disciple either weak in faith or new in the faith will be offended by the liberty of one more mature, it is the obligation of the mature disciple to forego the privileges that come with liberty and await the growth of the other as Christ Jesus awaits our growth in grace and knowledge.

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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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