

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 God honors words of the godly.

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

Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of May 31, 2014*

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.

I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, *to redeem those who were under the law, so that **we** might receive adoption as sons.* And because you are sons, God has sent the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. (Gal 4:1–8 emphasis added)

16.

Formerly when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those things that by nature are not gods — what might those things be? Sticks and stones, cast metal images of beasts or men, a book, the sound of spoken words ... how about a "book"? Modern humanity isn't so superstitious as to worship sticks and stones, but remains trusting of things written in books, this trust taught by a compulsory education system that assumes the contents of books are true. Every person knows this isn't true, but for a book to work its magic of conveying knowledge or permitting the person to escape the moment, the person suspends *disbelief* and thereby willingly accepts the book as true. The person plays along with the author, either to educate the person or to entertain the person.

When assumptions of the reader about the nature of truth or truth-telling found in a book are trampled upon by the author, *disbelief* returns: the book is

rejected. The reader cannot trust it. Thus, in the 1980s, in the village of Nikolaevsk on Alaska's Kenai Peninsula, Old Believer Russian Orthodox priests glued together pages of public school biology textbooks addressing evolution so that village students would continue to "trust" the education they were getting in the local school. A crisis of faith was averted. And the small community did not have to bear the expense of producing their own biology text.

From childhood, humanity is taught to trust books, with the ultimate trust being placed in religious texts such as the Torah, the Bible, the Qur'an ... when the reader assumes that the book he or she reads is the infallible word of God, the reader has effectively suspended *disbelief* for all time: the reader will accept as true whatever is found in the book, regardless of whether the contents of the book agree with the reader's own experiences. The reader will trust the book more than the reader will trust physical evidence—and this is actually good, for there is no or at best scant evidence of life after death apart from what is found in religious texts. Thus, there is scant evidence for not enjoying the pleasures this world offers, from food and drink to unrestrained sexual gratification. There is little reason to adhere to a moral code. And there is no reason to not become fully immersed in the pursuit of wealth via transactions.

The modern Western way of life represents the decay of Medieval Christianity. Las Vegas owes its existence to the decadence spawned by religious zealotry imposing its mores on decomposed Puritanism—underground speakeasies went to where their lights could shine brighter than desert stars.

According to Paul, God sent forth His Son to redeem those who were under the Law so that those who were under the Law might receive adoption as sons of God: what about Gentiles who were not under the Law, who were never under the Law, who despised the Law? Did God send forth His Son to redeem those who despise God and everything for which God stands? Did God send forth His Son to redeem Vegas call girls and their johns, who are perhaps more honest in what they do than politicians elected by Clark County voters?

The fullness of Gentiles cannot come to God until their hearts are healed; until their hearts are turned from their hatred of God ...

There is an intermediary state or nation between the full inclusion of Gentiles in the goodness of God and natural Israel, representing endtime Jews: this intermediary people amounts to endtime Christendom (greater Christianity); amounts to a billion plus people, most of them knowing little about God.

It will be those persons who claim to be the Body of Christ, who claim to be the Body of the slain Lamb of God, who claim to be the spiritual Body that died as Jesus' earthly body died and was then resurrected from death by the Father; it will be those who claim to be of Christ that will bridge the gap between Israel going into the Affliction and the fullness of Gentiles coming out of the Endurance.

Only one problem persistently exists: the spiritual Body of Christ died spiritually at the end of the 1st-Century, the beginning of the 2nd-Century [ca 100–102 CE]. ... It is this dead spiritual Body of Christ that will be returned to life in the 21st-Century, and it is this spiritual Body that will betray their brothers in Christ when the Body has been resurrected from death.

Jesus washed the feet of Judas Iscariot on the evening when Judas betrayed Him. This means that endtime Christians cannot spurn brethren even when they know who will betray them. The betrayal has to occur before the brother can be *marked*; for repentance remains possible until the deed is done.

If hard things are said in Sabbath Readings, it is with the foreknowledge that Christians will betray Christians, Sabbatharians will betray Sabbatharians, once the Second Passover liberation of Israel occurs. Why? Because when initially filled with the spirit of God, the testing of Israel will begin.

For 220 days, the testing will proceed in a manner analogous to the testing of Abraham: Christians will disclose to God the importance of family, of heritage, of ancestry to the Christian. And most of greater Christendom will fail their testing; for what is it that Matthew's Jesus said,

Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. (Matt 10:34–39)

Is not this what John's Jesus said? “Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him” (John 12:25–26).

Where Jesus is, His disciple must follow. Where Jesus is, there His disciple will be, and that isn't at a ham dinner on Easter.

Who is the Christian who loves this world so much that he or she will not give it up? Who is the Christian able to cling to life when death stalks the person? And who is the liar that told Christians they shall not die; they have immortal souls? Was not this liar the first community organizer, Satan the devil?

The Elect—those disciples of Christ Jesus who are foreknown, predestined, called, justified, and glorified (Rom 8:29–30) while they still live physically; those disciples that have passed from death to life without coming under judgment (John 5:24)—are not today the endtime Body of Christ although they usually fellowship on Sabbaths with spiritually dead Sabbatharian Christians. They count themselves as part of the Body of Christ, but they are not. Instead of being the Body of Christ, they are horns on the head of the Lamb for they are already one with their Head, Christ Jesus, before the Body is raised from death at the Second Passover ... there are too few of the Elect for them to have their own assemblies, except as two or three gather together in the name of Christ. And that is as large as assemblies of the Elect get in most of the world: two or three who can physically assemble together on the Sabbath, meeting in private homes. Thus, the Elect are sprinkled as salt on the top of Sabbatharian Christendom, with many Sabbatharians openly acknowledging that they are not yet born of spirit.

The Elect harm themselves by continuing to fellowship with spiritually dead Sabbatharians, from whose pulpits they hear what is false.

As the Father raised the dead earthly body of the man Jesus from death, the Father will raise the dead spiritual Body of Christ from death through filling every self-identified Christian with His holy spirit [*pneuma Theou*] at the Second Passover liberation of Israel. This nation of Israel is to be circumcised of heart—

The endtime nation of Israel is not a people of flesh, but an assembly of inner selves [*psuche—souls*]; therefore, outward circumcision is of no value to this assembly. Outward circumcision is, then, no longer an obstacle laid before adult Gentiles (Eph 2:11–17). And outward circumcision will not again be of value to Israel until the return of a physical sanctuary, a third earthly temple ... the second temple was built by the decrees of human kings [Cyrus and Herod] rather than by a decree of God to His servants. However, the third earthly temple will be constructed by the decree of the Messiah, and will be constructed by free people who are not under obligation to any Gentile king.

The Apostle Paul acknowledged that there were things he didn't understand (*e.g.*, Rom 7:15) for God did not permit Paul to either know about, or if he knew about, to speak about the Second Passover liberation of Israel. This does not mean that a second recovery of Israel—and of a second Israel (two recoveries)—will not occur at a second Passover, with this second recovery of Israel to begin where the two witnesses are, their geographical location to represent the earthly manifestation of a second or heavenly Jerusalem ... so that there is no misunderstanding, the *Jerusalem* where the two witnesses will be slain is not the earthly location of the City of David, but will be wherever the two witnesses are; for they will, during the Affliction, represent heavenly Jerusalem here on earth.

Is the preceding plain enough that even a janitor cannot misunderstand it: where the Lord was slain will be where the two witnesses are slain—

And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. (Rev 11:7–8)

But earthly Jerusalem is not called *Sodom*; nor is it called *Egypt*. So why these identifiers? ... Where was the Lord of the two witnesses slain? Here on earth. And where exactly on earth? The place of the skull: “they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull)” (Matt 27:33). So what city is located at *Golgotha*? The city of the dead, in the land of the dead, in the world of the dead, in the darkness of the Abyss, whose king makes war against the two witnesses, conquers them, and kills them (Rev 11:7).

The two witnesses will be killed here on earth. They will be killed wherever they are; for they represent spiritual Jerusalem here on earth. They represent *Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ*, as attorneys represent clients in criminal proceedings. They are not *Jerusalem*, but they will serve as Advocates for the Bride, delivering to the Bride words of truth for the Bride will not yet be born of spirit so the *Parakletos*, the spirit of truth, is not available to the Bride.

There is scriptural support for asserting that Jerusalem is not Sodom:

Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations, and say, Thus says the Lord [*YHWH*] to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth are of the land of the

Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. ... Behold, everyone who uses proverbs will use this proverb about you: “ Like mother, like daughter.” You are the daughter of your mother, who loathed her husband and her children; and you are the sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite. And your elder sister is Samaria, who lived with her daughters to the north of you; and your younger sister, who lived to the south of you, is Sodom with her daughters. Not only did you walk in their ways and do according to their abominations; within a very little time you were more corrupt than they in all your ways. As I live, declares the Lord [YHWH], your sister Sodom and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done. Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. They were haughty and did an abomination before me. So I removed them, when I saw it. (Ezek 16:2–3, 44–50)

Jerusalem as an earthly city is not, and never was known as *Sodom*. It is the spiritually ignorant who hold the premise that the two witnesses will be slain by Abaddon in earthly Jerusalem.

Again, the two witnesses will be Advocates for the Bride of Christ; thus, they will have the power and authority of spirit beings without being angelic sons of God.

As Jesus told His disciples that not even the Son of Man knew the day and hour of His coming (Matt 24:36), there are things that only the Father knows and that only the Father reveals at predetermined times to establish His primacy over man and angels. It was the prerogative of the Father to seal and keep secret the visions of the prophet Daniel until the time of the end; it was also the prerogative of the Father to unseal the visions of Daniel when the generic time of the end came upon humankind, this *time of the end* not to last longer than a generation (forty years). Thus, it has been the argument of *Philadelphia* since 2003 that Daniel’s visions were sealed by their earthly shadows seeming to fulfill the prophecies, that the things of this world—including the course of historical events—revealed and preceded the invisible things of God, with the surface of things masking and hiding the reality of these things. Hence, the Law of God, written on two stone tablets, formed the shadow and copy of the Law of God written on two tablets of flesh, the heart and the mind of the Elect, with these two tablets of flesh bearing an analogous relationship to the spirit of the man [*to pneuma tou ’anthropou*] that dwells in the soul [*psuche*] of the disciple as the two tablets of stone had to the physical ark of the covenant. This will now have Daniel’s visions pertaining to heavenly wars between demonic kings, the course of these wars and their outcomes revealed to Jesus’ disciples and friends through the wars of the human kings of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and [the two iron legs] the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires, with the Seleucid king pushed out of earthly Jerusalem by the Hammer in a manner different from how spiritual sons of light will defeat the Adversary, thus ending the shadow.

The partial hardening of the hearts and minds of natural Israel—this partial hardening to last until the fullness of Gentiles come to God—has lasted far longer than Paul anticipated; far longer than anyone in the 1st-Century anticipated. But

the midnight hour when humanity can get no farther from God is at hand. Humanity must shortly begin its return to God; for even Puritan America has become like Sodom and Gomorrah, openly embracing homosexuality through legalizing gay marriage and with openly gay soldiers defending America against all enemies, foreign and domestic ...

Can a gay soldier defend America from God? If not, then America needs to pick an enemy to fight other than God.

It is foolishness to ask God to bless America when America has picked a fight with God, a fight that it cannot win. It was bad enough that the founders of the United States of America neglected God when drafting the nation's establishing documents—

Which founder kept the Sabbath? Benjamin Franklin knew-to from his visits with the Governor of Rhode Island, but he didn't. In fact, he sought to undercut the Sabbatarians of the Ephrata Colony whenever he could, even to preventing paper mills from selling paper to the Colony so as to silence its printing press, his main competitor ... the Colony had to establish its own paper mill.

If the founders of America—in a manner as fundamental as keeping the Sabbath—acted contrary to the Commandments, how is it that America's establishing documents were inspired by God? They weren't; for democracy is not of God, never has been of God, and is contrary to God. Ask Korah what God thinks about democracy (Num chap 16).

The partial hardening that came upon the minds and hearts of natural Israel was of God, not of the Adversary. But while Paul implies “natural” Israel when he writes of this partial hardening, Paul didn't anticipate the passage of nearly two millennia before the glorified Jesus returned as the Messiah. Paul didn't anticipate the death of the Body of Christ, this death coming about through God the Father ceasing to draw disciples from this world through predestining them to be glorified; for no one can come to Christ Jesus until drawn by the Father from this world (John 6:44, 65) and delivered by the Father to Christ who then calls those who are His—those whom the Father gives to Him in a manner foreshadowed by the calling of the Twelve (John 17:6–12).

Prior to the Second Passover liberation of Israel, no one comes to Christ Jesus unless the Father draws this person from the world. Hence, the “Christians” who were the founders of the United States of America neither knew God nor were of God. Again, witness Ben Franklin's animosity against the Ephrata Colony, or George Washington compelling—not that they were unwilling—Ephrata to nurse his sick and wounded, after confiscating the Colony's paper stores for cartridges: American Colonials shot British Regulars with paper cartridges and wadding made from the unbound pages of Bibles printed in German by pacifist Sabbatarian Christians, and that is as close to God as America's founders ever got; for God cannot be found in the pulpits of a black-robed militia, or in bayonet charges.

Although effective, musket balls through which nails have been driven, these balls then smeared with manure as was done at Breed's Hill, isn't of God, who

doesn't need mortal men to fight His battles but is perfectly capable of defending His own ...

After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel. Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and lay sick; so he sent messengers, telling them, "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this sickness." But the angel of [YHWH] said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus says [YHWH], You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" So Elijah went. The messengers returned to the king, and he said to them, "Why have you returned?" And they said to him, "There came a man to meet us, and said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, Thus says [YHWH], Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" He said to them, "What kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?" They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite." Then *the king sent to him a captain of fifty men with his fifty. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, "O man of God, the king says, 'Come down.'" But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty men with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, "O man of God, this is the king's order, 'Come down quickly!'" But Elijah answered them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up and came and fell on his knees before Elijah and entreated him, "O man of God, please let my life, and the life of these fifty servants of yours, be precious in your sight. Behold, fire came down from heaven and consumed the two former captains of fifty men with their fifties, but now let my life be precious in your sight."* Then the angel of [YHWH] said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." So he arose and went down with him to the king and said to him, "Thus says [YHWH], 'Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word?—therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'" (2 Kings 1:1–16 emphasis added)

Question: What wrong to God had the fifty men [collectively, one hundred men] with the first two captains done? Were these men worse sinners than the fifty men with the third captain, the fifty that lived because their captain feared the man of God and by extension, God?

Whether the soldiers lived or died wasn't dependant upon the soldier, but upon the captains. Likewise, whether a nation lived or died before God wasn't determined by the righteousness of the people, but by the righteousness of their king, with a wicked king over a righteous people being removed by God because

of his wickedness, but with the righteousness of a good king covering even the unrighteousness of the people.

Whether a man of God lives or dies isn't dependent upon what this man of God does physically, but dependent upon whether God backs this man up by honoring his words. If God honors this man's words as He will honor the words of the two witnesses, then no harm can come upon this man of God that God doesn't permit for whatever reason. In the case of the two witnesses, commissioned to defeat Death, the fourth beast of Daniel chapter seven and the fourth horseman of the Apocalypse, by dying on a prescribed day—day 1256/1257 of the Affliction—and being publically resurrected from death on the doubled day 1260, God will give to these two the power to not only defend themselves but to call into existence plagues and famines that punish communities of lawless Christians for their rebellion against God. Thus, the two witnesses will do what Christ Jesus did not: they will aid God in toppling the spiritual king of Babylon and his administration of the single kingdom of this world.

Is that too difficult to accept? God slaying a people because of the unrighteousness of their king? And will this concept translate across time: will God slay Americans because of the unrighteousness of the national government and the unrighteousness of the President? Or is the slaying of the unrighteous now individual, every person slain for his or her own unrighteousness?

Consider what the prophet Isaiah wrote about healing:

For thus says the One who is high and lifted up,
who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:
"I dwell in the high and holy place,
and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit,
to revive the spirit of the lowly,
and to revive the heart of the contrite.
For I will not contend forever,
nor will I always be angry;
for the spirit would grow faint before me,
and the breath of life that I made.
Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I was angry,
I struck him; I hid my face and was angry,
but he went on backsliding in the way of his own heart.
I have seen his ways, but *I will heal him*;
I will lead him and restore comfort to him and his mourners,
creating the fruit of the lips.
Peace, peace, to the far and to the near," says [YHWH],
"and *I will heal him*.
But the wicked are like the tossing sea;
for it cannot be quiet,
and its waters toss up mire and dirt.
There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked." (Isa 57:15–21 emphasis added)

When the spirit that is in man grows faint and the breath of life is ready to be lost, the Lord says He will heal the one whom He struck; the one with whom He

has been angry ... striking this person did not produce the fruit of repentance; for the person maintained his backsliding ways—

The Lord dwells in the *high and lofty place* (heaven), but also with the person who has a contrite and lowly spirit, even though this person had sought unjust gain. He dwells with the person who desires to repent—and the seven endtime years of tribulation come upon humanity to test human beings, placing them figuratively between a rock and a hard place so that humanity's only way to live is by faith of the sort that will move mountains. But more of this in the following Reading.

*

*The person conducting the Sabbath service should
close services with two hymns, or psalms,
followed by a prayer asking God's dismissal.*

* * * * *

"Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright ©2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission.
reserved."

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