

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 June 20, 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 Revelation chapter 11, verse 1 through verse 14.

Commentary: 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).

The two witnesses are human beings; they are not angels. But the two witnesses are mature in their faith and have grown enough in grace and knowledge that they have use of the power of God. Also, the two witnesses will not be the mayor of Jerusalem and some other natural Israelite, or any combination of State of Israel officials. They will be as Moses and Aaron were: they will be brothers (in the Lord and/or natural brothers), with the one being the spokesman for the other.

- 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). No person will need the covering of Christ Jesus’ righteousness, for all will have the Law [Torah] written on hearts and minds. The sons of Adam will be under the New Covenant. However, this does not mean that anything goes, that good will come from doing evil, as some slanderously charged Paul with teaching in the 1st-Century (Rom 3:8), and most of Christendom has since taught under the banner of *cheap grace*. This means that evil—simple unbelief—will still condemn the disciple, for unbelief precludes repentance and serves as a delusion that cannot be overcome. The promise Paul makes to the Thessalonians is that those who refuse to love the truth and so be saved (2 Thess 2:10) will come under a strong delusion and believe what is false “in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (v. 12).

In his vision, the angel tells John, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. Let the evildoer still do evil and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy” (Rev 22:10–11) ... the following correspondence pertain:

- *The evildoer* is the inverse of *the righteous*, and *doing evil* is the inverse of *doing right*.
- *The filthy* or unclean is the inverse of *the holy*, and *being filthy* is the inverse of *being holy*.
- Since righteousness is obedience that results in keeping the commandments (1 John 3:4–10), *doing evil* is not keeping the commandments—and the person who doesn’t keep the commandments is filthy or unclean.

Before proceeding further in this direction, a poorly understood concept needs to be introduced.

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The person conducting the service should read or assign to be read Matthew chapter 9, verses 14 through 17; followed by Mark chapter 2, verses 18 through 22, and Luke chapter 5, verses 33 through 39.

Commentary: Jesus was with His disciples in the 1st-Century. That is obvious to anyone reading the text, but is Jesus with His disciples today?

Paul writes, “You [Roman converts], however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit [πνεύματι—*pneumati*], if in fact the Spirit of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ] does not belong to him. But if Christ [Χριστὸς] is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit [πνεῦμα] is life because of righteousness” (Rom 8:9–10).

If Christ is in you, is not the Bridegroom with you—and you with the Bridegroom?

The Pharisees were not born of spirit, and had no second breath of life dwelling within them.

John the Baptist was not born of spirit; that is the spirit of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] that descended upon Jesus as a dove to fulfill all righteousness (Matt 3:15–16). John was empowered by or filled with the spirit (Luke 1:15) as the first disciples were empowered by or filled with the spirit on that day of Pentecost following Calvary (Acts 2:4), but the

first disciples did not receive a second breath of life on Pentecost. They were “born of spirit” when Jesus breathed on ten of them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον – *breath holy*]” (John 20:22) on the same day that Jesus was resurrected. Thus, being filled with the spirit is not being born of spirit, but is having the power of God available for use, or to use.

The Greek linguistic icon πνεῦμα, like the icon ὁ θεός, is asked to do too much work; for πνεῦμα—*pneuma* represents moving air as in wind or deep breath (as in pneumatic tools and in pneumonia), and metaphorically represents any invisible force that functions as wind or deep breath. It certainly doesn’t represent personhood although in the 5th-Century, lawless theologians assigned personhood to the icon.

The direct translation of πνεῦμα into Latin is *sp̄iritus*, which is usually assigned the meaning of “breath” or the “breath of a god.” Either assignment is a reasonable rendering of how πνεῦμα was used by Greek speakers in the 1st-Century, but when the *breath of a god* became a god, the third member of a triune deity, *spirit* became a problematic icon that probably should be retired and *breath* used in its place by English speakers. Thus, Paul writes that disciples are not flesh but *breath* that is like the wind [πνεῦμα] that comes and goes without being seen, which is what Jesus said (John 3:8). Anyone who does not have the *breath of Christ* does not belong to Jesus, but if Christ is in the disciple, although the body is dead (yet physically breathing; the body will not enter heaven), the disciple that is *breath* (or like *breath*) is life or alive because of righteousness.

If the disciple is not the flesh but the inner new self that is like *breath* and that has been made alive whereas it was before dead or non-living as a computer program is dead or non-living—and if this inner new self is not male or female (attributes of the flesh), Jew or Greek (the ethnicity of the flesh), bond or free (the social status of the flesh), which is what Paul writes elsewhere (Gal 3:28)—then Jesus is presently with the disciple that will not fast because the Bridegroom is present. But does this disciple eat food? Does this disciple prepare food on the Sabbath? Does this disciple kindle a fire on the Sabbath? Or are all of these activities the things that the flesh does for its maintenance?

The shadow and type of—the chiral image of—the inner new self presently dwelling with Christ is the first disciples following Jesus during His earthly ministry, and one of those disciples was going to betray Him (John 6:71) ... as physically circumcised Israel in Egypt, dwelling in houses as the bondservants of Pharaoh, laboring to build for Pharaoh his treasure cities, form the left hand enantiomer of circumcised of heart Israel presently dwelling in tents of flesh, with these tents of flesh consigned to disobedience as the bondservants of the prince of this world, the spiritual king of Babylon (Isa 14:4), building in this world a model of democratic rule destined to fail, the following correspondences hold true:

- Israel dwelling in houses in Egypt, with these houses not able to leave Egypt, corresponds to inner new selves born of God dwelling in tents of flesh in this world, with these tents of flesh not able to leave this world.
- Israel’s lawlessness in Egypt was “covered” by its bondservant status, with Pharaoh taking upon himself and upon the people of Egypt the sins of Israel, just as the lawlessness of human beings not born of the breath of God

[πνεῦμα θεοῦ] do not have sin reckoned to them (Rom 5:13) because they are consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32).

- The new creature that is born of the breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] as a son and heir is not born under condemnation (Rom 8:1–2), but is born free [i.e., not consigned to disobedience] as Moses lived in the household of Pharaoh as a free man. But the tent of flesh into which this new creature is born remains the bondservant of sin (Rom 7:15–25).
- As Israel was liberated from bondage to Pharaoh at the first Passover, the tents of flesh in which new creatures dwell, these tents of flesh that have been consigned to disobedience, will be liberated from indwelling sin and death at a second Passover.
- All tents of flesh will be liberated from indwelling sin and death when the world is baptized in the breath of Christ [πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ] when the kingdom of this world is taken from the king of Babylon and given to the Son of Man (Dan 7:9–14; Rev 11:15–18).
- Therefore, the great commission is to deliver the endtime good news that all who endure to the end shall be saved (Matt 24:13), for all will be born of spirit and liberated from indwelling sin and death when the world is baptized in *spirit*.

For endtime disciples, there is no other “great commission” but to deliver the *good news* [gospel] that all who endure to the end shall be saved; for this is the good news that must be proclaimed to the whole world as a witness to all nations (Matt 24:14). And because *Philadelphia* alone delivers this good news, thereby keeping Jesus’ words about the Endurance when all of humankind will be born of the breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] and all who endure to the end shall be saved, *Philadelphia* will be kept from the hour of trial (the seven months of the first two woes — Rev chap 9) that is coming upon the world to try those that dwell on the earth (Rev 3:10).

The half hour of silence when the seventh seal is opened followed by the hour of trial equates to 315 days. If the second Passover that begins the seven endtime years of tribulation occurs on a year like 2011, the second Passover will occur on May 18/19; the Rebellion or great falling away will occur on Christmas 2011; the sixth seal will open on the December solstice in 2012, and Satan will be cast from heaven on Halloween (Oct 31/Nov 1) in 2014. Jesus will return on the first observable new moon crescent following the vernal equinox (the 1st of Abib, April 15/16) in 2018, which is “knowing” a lot of information in the same way that Peter knew that Jesus was the Christ (*cf.* Matt 16:17; John 6:68–69).

But it is putting new fabric [unshrunk wool] on an old garment, or new wine in an old wineskin that is of most interest ... if disciples are to put on Christ and Christ’s righteousness as if He were a garment, is He an old garment or a new garment?

If Jesus is the reality of the sacrifices as He is the reality of festivals, new moons, and the Sabbath (Col 2:16–17), then the sacrifices, festivals, new moons, and Sabbath are the old garment, the old wineskin, the old wine in the old wineskin that is better (Luke 5:39). No one, after drinking the old, says that the new is better—and here caution must be exercised, for are the traditions and practices of Christendom in the Interregnum (narrowly established as 325–1525 CE; more broadly held as 101–2001 CE) new cloth, or new wine, or are they simply lawlessness run amuck?

The writer of Hebrews says that Jesus has gone behind the curtain [the veil of the tabernacle] “as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek” (6:20), and goes on to say,

Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? *For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well.* For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an indestructible life. For it is witnessed of him,

“You are a priest forever,

after the order of Melchizedek.” [from Ps 110:4]

For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God. (6:11–19 emphasis added)

The old garment is not the Levitical priesthood and the “covering” or garment of animal sacrifices, but the priesthood of Melchizedek, to whom Abram paid tithes ... the old garment returned or was put back on in the priesthood of Christ Jesus, who is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The new garment is animal sacrifices, and no one having tasted the old wants anything to do with the new, which is hardly new two millennia after Jesus spoke.

The two witnesses, like Jesus Himself, are not descendants of Levi, but serve as priests because there has been a change in the law, a change in the temple, and a change in how disciples observe the Sabbath ... all of the commandments, ordinances, and rules that Israel received after the first Passover and before the giving of the Moab covenant is as new fabric sewn to an old garment, or new wine placed in old wineskins. Both garments will be torn and not wearable, and the old wine skin will burst and the new wine will be spilt.

The error Christendom made long ago was to assume that Jesus was new wine that could not be put in the wineskin of the first covenant, that Jesus was a new garment that covered *Christians* as animal sacrifices were the old garment that has been abolished, not realizing that animal sacrifices were added as a new covering for Israel’s lawlessness when Israel could not cover itself with obedience by faith as Abram covered himself before he received the promise of an offspring coming from his loins: the Levitical priesthood with its rules and regulations (the 613 commandments rabbinical Judaism finds in the Torah) is the new garment that cannot be torn to patch the priesthood that is forever, that is without beginning or ending of days.

Luke writes without comment, without explicating the points he makes. Apparently he was the only gospel writer who understood what Jesus did when Jesus turned the mocking of the Pharisees back on them, calling them Greeks [Gentile] children by telling

them a parable crafted as a Cynic after-death-fortune-reversal story like a Greek master would tell his young students (Luke 16:19–31), thereby using the Pharisees' education [Luke's education would have been similar to the Pharisees'] against them so that others who heard what Jesus said would not understand what was occurring because they were not familiar with Cynic narratives (a problem that plagues Christendom to this day). Luke presents the Lazarus-Dives parable without reflection as to why Jesus told the not-Hebrew story. Likewise, Luke adds a line to what Jesus said about new wine that Matthew and Mark do not: “And no one after drinking old wine desires new, for he says, “The old is good [better]”” (5:39), and it is this line that undercuts any notion that Jesus is new cloth or new wine and that the Levitical priesthood is old wine or an old garment.

The writer of Hebrews tells them (Hebrews who have come to Christ) that “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, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil” (5:12–14).

For the disciple mature in the faith, Luke records adequate information for the disciple to discern that the Melchizedek priesthood is better than the Levitical priesthood, with its added ordinances because Israel lacked the faith to believe the Lord ... all that was performed by Moses—as with all the works Jesus did—was not enough to cause the physically circumcised nation to believe the Lord. Miracles do not produce faith manifest as belief.

Even though Jesus said to Pharisees, “If I am not doing the works of the Father, then do not believe me; but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father” (John 10:37–38), the Pharisees did not believe the miracles but sought to arrest and kill Jesus (*v.* 39). And the disciples were not convinced by miracles: Jesus told His disciples, “Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves” (John 14:11). Apparently Philip's request to see the Father was rooted in subconscious unbelief.

The writer of Hebrews says, concerning Melchizedek, “He is without father or mother or genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God he continues a priest forever” (7:3) Abram paid tithes to this king of peace, and by extension, the sons of Levi pay homage to this man who did not descend from them; for the inferior is blessed by the superior (*v.* 7).

Perfection could not be obtained through the Levitical priesthood (Heb 7:11), which is why there is a return to old wine in old wineskins and another high priest after the order of Melchizedek, with His disciples forming His Body so that they are always with Him as the two witnesses that “are the two olive trees and two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth” (Rev 11:4) are always with Him. Christ's disciples cannot wear the new garments of the Levitical priesthood; they can only wear the old garment worn by Melchizedek. They can only be old wine in old wineskins even though they have only recently come to Christ, seemingly an oxymoron but one like the angel telling the prophet Zechariah, “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house [that is not in this world]; his hands shall also complete it” (4:9).

Christ's disciples do not eat the manna gathered in the wilderness, but the true Bread of Life that has come down from heaven. Christ's disciples cannot use the added

ordinances given to the Levitical priesthood as patches on the garment of grace. They cannot be both new wine and old wine; for the new is not better but inferior, harsh and raw. The new wine has been set away in the cellar to age until the Millennium begins.

Unbelief is manifested by endtime disciples in their rejection of Christ (what Catholic and Evangelical Christendom teach). Sabbatarian disciples also reject Christ by diligently adding new cloth to the old garment of the Melchizedek priesthood ... Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek, but too many Sabbatarian disciples want to give homage to the Levitical priesthood and to the nation that had to be told not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath after rebelling against God at Sinai—the glory that shown from Moses' face was to be that nation's Sabbath fire.

The testimony of the Lord to Isaac was that “Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws” (Gen 26:5), but were those statutes and commandments the ones given to the Levitical priesthood because of Israel's unbelief? Or was there necessarily a change in the law so that the sons of Levi could be priests to their brothers? ... If there was a change in the law so that Jesus could be high priest (Heb 7:12), there was an earlier change (between Melchizedek and Moses) so that the sons of Levi could be priests.

Melchizedek precedes Moses and does not follow Moses; so the law that was in effect before Moses has returned and will remain in effect until there is again an earthy sanctuary that can only be entered by outwardly and inwardly circumcised Israelites (Ezek 44:7, 9) ... inward circumcision pertains to the faith Abram had when he believed the Lord and had his belief counted as righteousness (Gen 15:6; Rom 4:3). This circumcision does not come via a cutting made with the hands, but by the soft breath of the Lord—and Israel today is the nation that is circumcised of heart (Rom 2:26–29), the nation that believes the Lord and has its belief counted as righteousness (Rom 4:5). But believing the Lord will have the disciple doing those things that are pleasing to the Lord—and not kindling a Sabbath fire was never counted among those things, but was added because of Israel's unbelief. Rather, believing the Lord will have the disciple loving God with heart and mind, and loving one's neighbor as the person loves him or herself.

The disciple that gathers the things of this world to him or herself on the Sabbath does not love the Lord, but continuing in the context of Jesus' disciples not fasting because the Bridegroom is present, Jesus compared his disciples gathering grain to eat as they passed through grain fields to David, in whose lineage Jesus was, eating the showbread that was only lawful for the priests to eat (Luke 6:3–4) ... Jesus' disciples as His Body (1 Cor 12:27) are priests after the order of Melchizedek and have as much right to gather and eat on the Sabbath as David had to eat when David hungered. Now, what is not at issue is gathering to eat on the first day of the week or on another day; what is at issue is gathering to immediately eat to satisfy hunger, for disciples do not fast when the Christ is with them. Disciples have the liberty to satisfy their hunger when they hunger on the Sabbath, for the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath (Luke 6:5), and disciples as the Body of Christ are also Body of the Son of Man. The Sabbath exists to serve them, and not they to serve the Sabbath.

Someone will be quick to ask about Atonement [*Yom Kipporim*], the day on which Israel is to afflict their inner selves, with this “affliction” interpreted to be fasting ... is the person that is required to eat or to take medicines to maintain consciousness during the day required to fast on Atonement? He or she is not, is he or she? The disciple can

consume whatever is necessary to sustain physical life and is not to be cut off from the Church; for Atonement, like the weekly Sabbath, exists to serve the disciple and not the disciple to serve the day, which doesn't mean that able bodied disciples should not keep the Fast, which was still being used to make time for Christians more than a quarter century after Calvary (see Acts 27:9). What it means is that those things about which Moses writes pertains to the inner new creature, with the application of these things tempered by common sense and the principle that the weekly Sabbath is the servant of disciples, that there is a change of the law so that Jesus can be high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

The change of the law does not abolish the office of high priest or abolish the Torah that includes far more than the covenant made when Israel left Egypt, but abolishes the Levitical priesthood and the covering (garment) of animal sacrifices as the prevailing ministry. Disciples have returned to a time like when Abram left Ur of the Chaldeans, journeyed by faith with his father Terah to the land of Haran where his father will die, then continued on to the land of Canaan, the Promised Land, where a promised son will be born to him. This promised son is the new self that will or will not have the mortal flesh put on immortality when judgments are revealed (1 Cor 4:5).

Old wine in old wineskins is indeed better. And the two witnesses after being glorified, because of the qualities of timelessness, meet Abraham in the flesh, a declaration sure to confuse disciples without discernment, infants able only to ingest milk.

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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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