

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 foundation [rock] of Jonah.

Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of July 12, 2008

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 Galatians chapters 3 & 4.

Commentary: Paul received his gospel not from other men but directly from Christ by revelation (Gal 1:12). This is a bold claim, for it opens Paul up to being easily rejected: how do we know that Paul was of God? All in Asia had left him while he still lived (2 Tim 1:15). The Hellenists at Corinth questioned whether he was of God (1 Cor 4:3). Jews and Jewish converts in Judea sought to kill him. And today, on Sabbatarian chat-groups Paul's credentials are continually challenged.

But Paul claims that he, not Peter or any of the other first disciples, laid a foundation and that no other foundation can be laid, and that this foundation is Christ Jesus (1 Cor 3:10-11). Paul claims that it was given to him to (1) know God's will, to (2) see the Righteous One, and to (3) hear a voice from his mouth (Acts 22:14); for Paul was to be a witness for God to everyone of what he had seen and heard (v. 15).

Such a claim to possession of truth should be troubling to all who believe that they, themselves, possess the truth, either received from another teacher such as Ellen G. White or Herbert W. Armstrong or discovered by their own diligent study and scholarship.

What was it that Paul taught that caused so many problems for him from nearly everyone?

The *what* is contained in the following clauses: "[F]or in Christ you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise" (Gal 3:26-29).

When a person is baptized, the person remains as the person was. If the person were male, the person remains male. If the person were circumcised, the person remains circumcised [i.e., a Jew]. If the person were a slave, the person was still a slave. The tent of flesh doesn't change. But baptism isn't to the death of the flesh, but to the death of the old nature, the old self, the old man that activated the flesh. So following baptism, the

new creature or new self that dwells within the tent of flesh (that only got wet at baptism) should dwell alone as the person's previous human nature had dwelt alone within the flesh to cause the flesh to respond in various ways to outside and internal stimuli. And this new self is the son of God born of the spirit of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] that came from heaven when the disciple received the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον]. Unfortunately, too often the crucified old man or old self didn't die, but continues to live on, corrupting the new self through any number of bad habits and failings.

The Greek word [linguistic icon] "*pneuma*—πνεῦμα" that forms the root of English words such as "pneumatic tools" or "pneumonia" pertains to moving air as in "wind," or "deep breath," or an invisible force that functions as wind does. When πνεῦμα pertains to breath, it is directly translated into Latin as *spīritus*. The English word "spirit" comes by way of Norman French from the Latin *spīritus*, whereas the English word "breath" comes from Old English *bræth* from the Germanic root *bhreu* for a vapor as that which comes from a simmering pot [here a person can see how language is affected by the geographical region where a word originates, for in the North breath is seen as a vapor whereas it is not in southern regions]. Thus, "spirit" should be understood to simply mean "breath," either metaphorical breath (for God doesn't breath air) or literal breath.

When aspiration or exhaled breath is employed in uttering a consonant, this aspiration is inscribed [written] as the glottal stop, the letter /h/ in English ... remember, a consonant is formed by interrupting the vowel stream of sound, with the particular consonant formed by where this interruption occurs within the mouth or at the lips. Thus, a graph of a consonant shows a downturn in sound, followed by a blank spot, then the upturn of sound, with the sound again returning to what the vowel stream was, or to a changed vowel stream. Aspiration is pressure against the blank spot, for sound never completely stops nor does the stream of sound stop between words. This non-interruption in the stream of sound is what makes learning a foreign language difficult, for until a template is formed within the mind as to how much "sound" makes a word, all that is heard is uninterrupted noise.

Because aspiration or "breath" is written as the glottal stop, the insertion of an /h/ or an /ah/ before or after a consonant carries "significance" ... in the context of healing the invalid of thirty-eight years (John 5:5), Jesus asked this invalid, "Do you want to be healed," and when the invalid answered that he had no one to put him in the water, Jesus told the invalid to, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk" (*vv.* 7–8). He told the man to stand, and walk upright, and "at once the man was healed" (*v.* 9). The Jewish authorities objected to Jesus healing on the Sabbath, objected to Jesus making Himself the equal to God, and sought to kill Him. But in confronting these authorities, Jesus said, "For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son" (*vv.* 21–22). And it is here where Paul's gospel enters into play: *the new creature that is a son of God has been given life by the Father when He "raised" the dead, giving life to that which never before had life in the heavenly realm by placing in the person the earnest of the holy spirit* [πνεῦμα ἅγιον]. Human beings are not born with immortal souls, or with any form of eternal life. Every person receives eternal life as the free gift of the Father (Rom 6:23), but this life dwells in a tent of flesh. As *Elohim* [singular in usage] breathed "life" into the nostrils of the first Adam, then a red mud corpse (Gen 2:7), thereby making Adam a *nephesh* or breathing creature, the Father "breathes" spiritual

“life” into physically living but spiritually dead sons of disobedience, with this latter life entering the person not through the nose but through the mind and heart.

The “breath” received by the first Adam that gave him life entered him through his nostrils, but the “breath of God” [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] that caused Jesus to fulfill all righteousness entered Jesus, the second or last Adam, when it lit as a dove on the man Jesus and remained with Him. And this “breath of God” [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] entered Jesus not through the front of His face [i.e., His nostrils] but at His shoulders or neck, where the blowhole of a whale would be located.

It is traditionally taught that Jesus built His Church on the rock [πέτρα] that was the Apostle Peter, a teaching that ignores a linguistic fault, but again, Paul said that he, not Peter, laid the foundation for the house of God, and that no one else can lay another foundation. So a disciple needs to reexamine what Jesus said when He asked His disciples who people said He was:

He [Jesus] said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.” (Matt 16:13–17)

There is a usually undetected problem here: Peter was not the son of Jonah [Βαριωνᾶ—*Barjona*] (Matt 16:17), but the son of John [υἱὸς Ἰωάννου] (John 1:42). Peter was Simon of John [Σίμων Ἰωάννου] (John 21:16). And Jesus is the one who identifies Peter as Simon of John, or Simon, son of John; so Jesus knows that Peter’s father is “John” [Ἰωάνν—], not “Jonah” [Ἰωνᾶ]. But the misidentification is not a mistake.

Again, the rough breathing or aspiration on the vowel /ά/ would normally be written in English as the glottal stop /h/ or /ah/. The nasal consonant /v/ is transcribed into English as /n/. Thus, “John” has the aspiration of deep breathing preceding the nasal consonant, whereas “Jonah” has the aspiration moved behind the nasal. Where physical “breath” enters the physical tent of flesh (through the nostrils) differs from where spiritual “breath” enters this same tent of flesh.

- For Jesus to move aspiration (rough breathing) from in front of the nasal consonant /άv/to behind the nasal /vᾶ/is directly akin to moving a person’s nose from the front of his or her face to a whale-like blowhole behind the person’s head.
- The sign of Jonah has now taken on greater significance, for the “great fish” [an expression usually reserved for whales] breathes through the back of its head.

What Jesus pointed to when He called Peter the son of Jonah was the prophet Jonah and all that Jonah represented, including being the spokesman from God for Nineveh [Nineveh worshiped Dagon, the fish god], an uncircumcised nation. By emerging from a great fish, probably a whale, Jonah became analogous to the new creature or new self that is spirit and has been born of spirit that emerges from a tent of flesh after death and at the resurrection ... as Jonah is made alive while in the belly of the great fish, the new creature is made alive within the tent of flesh of a living human being. As Jonah is of a taxonomically higher order than any fish or whale, the new creature is of a higher order than is the tent of flesh. A human being has no life but that which comes through the

person's nose prior to being born of spirit, but when this person is born of spirit the tent of flesh becomes like the body of the whale in relationship to the new creature being like Jonah, with the breath [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] that sustains the life of the new creature coming through the back of the head or neck as a whale breathes through its blowhole.

Jesus said He would give one sign that He was from heaven, the sign of Jonah. And He told Peter in figurative language that on the foundation [rock] of Jonah, He would build His church.

When for a second time the Pharisees and Sadducees asked Jesus to show them a sign from heaven (Matt 12:38–40; 16:1), Jesus said,

He answered them, “When it is evening, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.’ And in the morning, ‘It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ [note: same sign] You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah.” So he left them and departed. (Matt 16:1-4)

The context in which a red sky appears changes the meaning of the one sign. When the red sky appears as darkness approaches, it means fair weather; whereas when the red sky appears in the morning, the sign indicates threatening weather. And the sign of Jonah is a similar sign: the sign of Jonah pertains to the resurrection of Jesus' physical body and is the equivalent to the red sky appearing at evening. But when the sign of Jonah pertains to the resurrection of Jesus' spiritual Body [i.e., the Church], it is the equivalent to the red sky appearing in the morning. The seven endtime years of tribulation are the stormy and threatening day that will begin when the dead Body of Christ is resurrected, for the gates of Hades can no more prevail against the Body of Christ than they could against the physical body of Jesus. [This resurrection of the Church after the third day will be discussed next time.]

Returning, now, to what Jesus told Peter, “And I tell you, you are Peter [Πέτρος], and upon this rock [πέτρα], I will build my church [ekklesia—ἐκκλησίαν]” (Matt 16:18), and we see that the /os/case ending on the masculine name Peter [Πέτρ—] becomes the vowel /α/when moving to the genitive case, or from *Peter* to *petra*. To verbally utter the /os/ case ending of Πέτρος requires puckering the lips and exhaling through the puckered lips, thereby locating the exhalation of breath to the frontmost position of the face; whereas, to verbally utter πέτρα requires opening the mouth and breathing in/out from near the back of the throat—and this movement of utterance from exhalation at the front of the mouth to the back of the mouth [Πέτρος » πέτρα] is analogous to the movement of aspiration /h/ occurring before the nasal consonant /n/ to occurring after the nasal consonant [áv » vâ].

This linguistic play is fully incorporated within the sign of Jonah, and this “play” has not previously been well understood in Christendom.

Jesus told Peter that He would build an assembly or congregation [ekklesia] on the movement of breath [Greek: *pneuma*; Latin: *spīritus*] from mouth (the /os /case ending), and from the nose (the aspiration before the nasal consonant /áv/) to the person's heart and mind. Jesus said that He would construct an assembly, a church, not based upon apostolic succession beginning with Peter, but upon Israel receiving a second life, a second life-giving breath, with this second life-giving breath received not

through the front of the face but through the back of the head and neck, the areas closest to the heart and the mind.

The Apostle Paul understood this concept, which is why he writes that sons of God are neither male nor female. The whale-like tent of flesh remains male or female. The “Jonah-like” new creature that now dwells within the whale-like tent of flesh is neither male nor female for biological gender pertains to the flesh and to the things of this world.

We know that Paul understood this concept of being twice born for he writes, “For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision” (Rom 2:25) ... what happens? Does the foreskin grow like Pinocchio’s nose when a lie is told? Of course not—the flesh remains as it was. The uncircumcision is now of the inner self.

Paul continues,

So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. (Rom 2:26-29)

The prophet Jeremiah wrote,

Behold the days are coming, declares the Lord [YHWH], when I will punish all those who are circumcised merely in the flesh—Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all of these nations are uncircumcised, and all of the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart. (9:25-26)

The assembly or Church that Christ promised to build would not be built on outward circumcision, but on circumcision of the heart, which is circumcision of the inner new self or creature born of spirit that presently dwells in a tent of flesh ... within the splintered churches of God there is utter rejection of the concept that Christians are now “born of spirit,” or “born again.” But this rejection comes from a true lack of spiritual understanding: as cited above, Jesus said that the Father raises the dead (John 5:21) and that the Son gives life to whom He will (same verse).

To whom does the Son give life if the Father raises the dead?

There is no competition between the Father and the Son to see who can first get to a corpse to raise it from death ... Adam was condemned to death because of his transgression of the single commandment the Lord gave to this man of mud. Since Adam, every person born of flesh has been consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32 — “concluded to sin” in some translations) and born into this world “dead” as sons of disobedience; every human being has been born spiritually lifeless, born as a corpse—

The visible things of this world reveal the invisible things of God (Rom 1:20), thereby making the visible things of this world the shadow and copy of the things of God. But the visible things of this world form the mirror-image of the things of God; thus as labor pains precede human birth in this world and as Eve’s labor pains preceded delivery of Cain and Abel, labor pains will follow (not precede) the birth of a spiritual Cain and a spiritual Abel when Zion delivers her children (Isa 66:7-8). As Isaac was the promised physical seed of Abraham, with this seed coming from a long dead womb (the womb of

Sarah), Jesus is the promised spiritual seed of Abraham, with this seed coming from a virgin womb (the womb of Mary). As a human being is born into this world as a son of the first Adam and as a son of disobedience, Christ Jesus was born into this world as the son of *the Logos* [ὁ λόγος] and not born consigned to sin, but born free to keep the commandments. And as death follows life in this physical world, death precedes life in the spiritual realm. Hence, the Father raises the dead by giving them life, beginning with the man Jesus, the First of the harvest of firstfruits—and Jesus received this life from the Father when the breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] descended as a dove, lit and remained on Him, thereby causing Him to fulfill all righteousness (Matt 3:15). So when the Son gives life to whom He will, He causes the mortal flesh to put on immortality: in this mortal tent of flesh has dwelt a son of God since the person was born again, or born from above, or born a second time through the Father giving life to the person. So it is not the new creature that puts on immortality, for this new creature is “life” that has come from heaven in the form of the divine breath of God. It is the tent of flesh that must put on immortality, for this tent of flesh comes from the first Adam, not the last Adam, a life-giving spirit (1 Cor 15:45).

When judgments are revealed upon Jesus’ return (1 Cor 4:5), the Son will give life to whom He will through all judgment having been given to Him (John 5:22) ... the Holy Spirit will have been poured out on all flesh (Joel 2:28) when the single kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man (*cf.* Rev 11:15-18; Dan 7:9-14), a one time event that occurs halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation, occurs when Satan is cast from heaven (Rev 12:7-10) and forty-two months remain (Rev 13:5) before Christ’s return as the *anointed one*, the Messiah. As the world was physically baptized into death by the flood of Noah’s day, the world will be baptized into life by the outpouring of the breath of God when Satan is cast from heaven and comes claiming to be the messiah; when spiritual Babylon and its king (Isa 14:4) falls and the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Father and His Christ. Then all of humankind, during these last 1260 days, will be born of spirit and will be part of the harvest of firstfruits. [But God is not a respecter of persons, the reason why the third woe (Rev 11:14) remains to be completed.]

When asked by His disciples for what would be the sign of His coming and of the close of this age, Jesus said, “You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet” (Matt 24:6) ... how many disciples today hear of wars and rumors of wars and are alarmed? Judging from the alarmist literature produced by many Sabbatarian fellowships, the business of Sabbatarian Christianity is scaring disciples with the latest war rumor. But Jesus said not to be alarmed by such rumors, for “nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains” (*vv.* 7-8).

Those physical things that happen to the sons of disobedience, irrespective of whether these sons are or are not outwardly circumcised, should not alarm disciples for they are at best only the beginning of the birth pains: they are not the hard labor pains of Zion giving birth to many sons of God. Those labor pains begin when “they will deliver you [Jesus’ disciples] up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake” (Matt 24:9) ... between verse 8 and verse 9, the Tribulation begins, with Zion giving birth to a spiritual Abel first, then to a spiritual Cain when the great falling away occurs. Then after three and a half years, when the man of

perdition (a human being possessed by Satan) is taken and Satan is cast from heaven, Zion will give birth to a third son, a spiritual Seth that will be accepted by simply enduring to the end without taking upon himself the mark of death, the mark of the beast. This spiritual Seth is the third part of humankind (Zech 13:9). And the endtime gospel that Jesus said would “be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations” (Matt 24:14) is the birth announcement of this spiritual Seth: “But the one who endures to the end will be saved” (*v.* 13). Born of spirit when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh, spiritual Seth is the one who will endure to the end.

Except for a remnant of Christendom (Rev 12:17), and except for the 144,000 [natural Jews who accepted Christ during the first 1260 days of the Tribulation and as such are spiritual virgins] (Rev 14:1-5; 7:4-8), the two parts of humankind (Zech 13:8) will be physically and/or spiritually dead when Satan is cast from heaven. Only the one part remains, and this one part will be the people of God (*v.* 9).

One death is enough to end one life—unless a person has been born of spirit, the person will not, and indeed, cannot experience the second death. Thus, if a person is not today born of spirit, regardless of how evil the person is, the person will not experience the second death, the lake of fire.

Paul’s gospel was difficult for even Peter to fully grasp (2 Pet 3:15-17), and it is impossible for the person whose focus is the flesh to grasp the concept of a second life residing within the same tent of flesh that was a son of disobedience prior to being drawn and called by the Father and the Son.

When Jesus told Nicodemus, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is flesh [i.e., born of the water of the womb] is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:5-6), Nicodemus did not understand what Jesus meant about being born a second time—and Jesus asked, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet do not understand these things. ... If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?” (*vv.* 10, 12)

A person simply cannot understand heavenly things if a person is unable to comprehend what Paul [and Jesus] taught about a second life, a second breath of life dwelling in the same tent of flesh that the old man or old creature received at birth from the womb. Endtime prophecies about Israel are about what happens to the nation born of spirit, or more simply put, the Church. Endtime prophecies about Israel are not about an outwardly only circumcised nation. To believe they are comes from not understanding what Paul taught—and Paul had trouble making his gospel understood while he lived.

Why is it that an endtime disciple can believe the story of Nebuchadnezzar having his human nature suddenly taken from him and being given in its place the nature of an ox for seven years, then receiving again his human nature (Dan chap 4) yet not understand that his or her own human nature can be as easily taken from the person, or that a second “life” or nature be given to the person when the former nature is crucified with Christ, hence raised up unto death? Has this disciple not contemplated what it means to be crucified with Christ (Rom 6:6), or to have died with Him so that the person might live with Him? Are Paul’s words hollow and without meaning, vain platitudes overused by Evangelical Christendom to say something while believing nothing? Or do these words of Paul that lay out his gospel have real meaning? If they do, then the person who

makes him or herself into a willing servant of sin is not under grace but under the law, with the power of the law being death.

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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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