

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 sheep.

Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of July 25, 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.

Last Sabbath's reading ended with, "What the unsealed visions of Daniel reveal is the spiritual governing authority that God placed over humanity. And this will be the subject of next Sabbath's reading." But before returning to Daniel, a tangential subject needs to be addressed: sheep and shepherds.

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The person conducting the services should read or assign to be read John chapter 10, verses 1 through 18; followed by Ezekiel chapter 34.

Commentary: *To him the gatekeeper opens* (John 10:3) ... Jesus identifies Himself as the good Shepherd (v. 14); He is not the gatekeeper. Therefore, in the linguistic structure of what Jesus says to the Pharisees that asked if they were blind (John 9:40), Jesus, after saying that they would be without guilt if they were blind (v. 41), identifies Himself as the good Shepherd, Israel as sheep, with a Gatekeeper also being present. Logically, the Gatekeeper will be the Father; for no human being (including John the Baptist) will open the way for the Son of God to go to His sheep. Rather, it is human beings or demons (or both) that climb into the sheepfold by ways other than going through the gate ... thieves and wolves in sheep's clothing that have come to steal, kill, and destroy (v. 10) enter the sheepfold by ways other than through the gate that the Gatekeeper opens only to the Good Shepherd.

Why doesn't the Gatekeeper stop the thieves and wolves from entering the sheepcote? He is able to stop them. But this is akin to asking why does God permit disciples to experience trials, or why does the Father prune disciples that bear fruit so that they will bear more fruit (John 15:2).

It is this question—why doesn't the Gatekeeper simply take the lives of thieves and wolves that climb into the sheepfold by a back way—that reaches across Scripture from the false prophets that represented themselves as servants of the Lord in ancient Israel to endtime false prophets who represent themselves as servants of the Lord now and in the Tribulation.

Ezekiel chapter 34 reaches across time, going from false shepherds to fat sheep, both of which prey upon the servants of the Lord. But it is the verses that precede John chapter 10 (i.e., 9:40–41) that identifies the thieves and wolves: all who say they see but who do not believe Jesus, regardless of whether those who claim to see are of natural Israel or of the Christian Church, retain their guilt (their sins are not covered). They are not of Christ, and when they represent themselves as Christian teachers and theologians, they are thieves and wolves that come to steal disciples from Christ; for they use the name of Christ to facilitate their mischief. Understand, it isn't Christ Jesus who *steals* disciples; who hides Scripture from disciples as the Roman Church did for centuries; who tells those disciples who want to keep the commandments that they are Judaizers; who take tithes and offerings to build great edifices here on earth. The thieves and wolves seek to separate disciples from the Christ Jesus by hindering disciples from walking as Jesus walked.

There is within human beings a yearning to serve something greater than themselves. Tapping into this yearning has permitted the Adversary to do a tremendous amount of mischief in the name of Christ, and has permitted multiple thousands of his servants to live through burying the dead; i.e., preaching the dead into heaven. These servants of the Adversary (2 Cor 11:14–15) have not taught “Christians” to walk as Jesus walked; to take the Passover sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed; to keep the precepts of the law. They have made *Christianity* and Christ Jesus a loathing in this world ... 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” (Matt 10:34); yet the thieves and wolves vigorously insist that Jesus came to bring peace while they “baptized” entire nations at the edge of the sword. Instead of Jesus being seen as a threat to the rule of the Adversary (what Jesus meant when He said He came to bring a sword), those who ruled this world under the Adversary used Jesus as a sword to slay millions.

The thieves and wolves claim Jesus came to promote social justice; that He would want a health care system that would see all insured; that He is His brother's keeper ... if Jesus is His brother's keeper, why do the governments of men have to get involved in His brother's affairs?

In this end of the age period, a gospel of social justice has superseded the simple message of obedience to God, for obedience is not an easy gospel to market to peoples consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32). And this gospel of social justice is neither “just” nor social, but is an elevation of Prince John borrowing the language of Robin Hood; for when the Father drew a person from this world (John 6:44, 65) by giving this person a second breath of life, the person was no longer of this world even though he or she still lived in this world. In His prayer shortly before He was taken to be questioned and crucified, Jesus said to the Father, “I am not praying for the world, but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours ... the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world” (John 17:9, 14). The world loves its own. The American president, whomever is serving, will confer with leaders of the National Council of Churches, for this Council is of this world and consists of agents of the Adversary that seek a more just world for the Adversary.

When Jesus saw an invalid of thirty-eight years by the pool of Bethesda, a man He had seen there before—because it was a Sabbath day and Jesus was about to deliver the Father’s words (speech-acts) as a sermon from the Father, Jesus asked the man if he wanted to be healed. The man thought only in terms of entering the pool, of the spirit of God stirring the waters of the pool, and of the first person in the pool after the waters were stirred being healed, and the man said that others always got into the water before him, that he had no one to put him in. The man thought healing could only come when the breath of God stirred the water; he didn’t entertain the possibility of Jesus healing him, of the words of Jesus being the breath of God. So in a way, the man was like today’s healthcare workers and politicians that think only in terms of health insurance and paying for medical care, but Jesus was about to deliver a speech-act of the Father, a speech-act too large to be expressed in human words, and Jesus told the man, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk” (John 5:8). And the man was healed without receiving any governmental benefits and without a hospital bill, which is a putdown of those who forget that Christ will return and put an end to the present governments of this world, including America’s.

Understand, Jesus’ actual words were, *Get up, take up your bed, and walk*, words that could have been spoken by any Pharisee or Sadducee or Evangelical pastor and nothing much would have happened: the man would have remained an invalid. But Jesus spoke the Father’s words, which comes with or through His breath [πνεῦμα θεοῦ] crossing dimensions, and the Father’s words delivered on seven Sabbaths healed those seven recorded times that what is written in Scripture was written to cause disciples to believe that Jesus is the Christ (John 20:31).

Again, the oral utterance of what Jesus said to the man could have been said by anyone, but the unseen breath of the Father that came with the words Jesus spoke instantly healed the man. Instead of stirring the waters of the pool of Siloam, the breath of God made whole the man who had no one to put him into the pool ... today, the breath of God makes whole, makes alive the person who lives with a dead inner self without even knowing that he or she is dead. Whereas circumcision “heals” part of a man by placing the man under the law, with circumcision occurring on the Sabbath (when the Sabbath is the eighth day after birth) so that the Law of Moses may not be broken (John 7:22–23), Jesus healed the whole man on the Sabbath, thereby giving the man relief from his longtime affliction. And what greater relief can be given to a person today than to make the dead alive so that this person can enter into God’s presence?

How can a person be dead without knowing that he or she is dead ... physically, the dead know nothing (Eccl 9:5), and the visible, physical things of this world reveal the invisible things of God. Hence, the physically dead as corpses form the shadow and type (chiral image) of the spiritually dead, with physical death following life while living human beings are lifeless spiritual corpses before being born of God; so what pertains to physical corpses pertains to spiritual corpses when it comes to knowing nothing and the memory of them being forgotten. Those human beings who have not yet been born of God cannot understand the things of God even when they want to have a relationship with God; they know nothing of God. And how much more readily apparent can the

truism of the statement be shown than by Muslim fundamentalists, people of the Book, carrying out suicide bombing attacks—as the Roman Church made converts at the edge of the sword, both Sunni and Shia Muslims attempt to spread their flavor of Islam with roadside bombs and suicide belts. If either knew God, they would not make themselves agents of the Adversary, seeking to rule this world while it must necessarily remain the property of the Adversary.

No one transgressing the commandments of God serves God: the end never justifies the means. Murder is always murder. To deliberately kill another person is always problematic. Paul (then Saul) consenting to the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58; 8:1) in his zeal to serve God was not justified by Paul's intentions. Yes, Paul's complicity in the stoning was forgiven, but Paul's complicity discloses just how far he was from God when he thought he was serving God—and so it is with every person who breaks commandments in his or her zeal to serve. It is never acceptable to transgress even the least of the ten living words spoken by the Lord, with the Sabbath commandment usually considered least ... some will argue that the least of the commandments are ones like having tassels on the corners of garments (Num 15:38) so Israel will not forget the commandments, but when the Torah is written on hearts and placed inside the Israelite (from Jer 31:33), there will be no forgetting the commandments and no need for tassels. Sin will step behind being a transgression of the commandments to being simple unbelief, with the least of the commandments pertaining to the defining thing of this world, time. Loving God doesn't change when going from this physical realm to the heavenly realm, nor does loving neighbor or honoring parents. What changes (or better, what doesn't ever change) is the moment: the heavenly realm is timeless. There is no decay. The moment doesn't decay into the next moment; thus, shortcutting a long argument, heaven is represented in this earthly realm by the Sabbath day. Observing the Sabbath becomes a type and shadow of entering into God's presence, with the expression "God's rest" being a euphemism for entering into His presence (Ex 33:14). Therefore, the Millennium, like the "rest" the Lord gave to Israel under Joshua and under the judges and during Solomon's reign (with forty years being the common length of these periods of rest), becomes a type of entering into God's presence where there are no enemies to fight.

Ancient Israel wars, with the sanctioned killing of peoples, formed the shadow and type (chiral image) of Christians waging ideological war with the many sons of disobedience; with the human deaths on ancient Israel's battlefields representing the deaths of the old selves or old natures of sons of disobedience when repentance and baptism occurs after these sons of disobedience receive a second breath of life. King David was not permitted to build a house for the Lord, for David was a bloody man. Nor was Paul permitted to lay more than the foundation of the spiritual house of God. But Christ Jesus is both the cornerstone (the beginning) and the capstone (the end) of the house of God, with every piece of the house being a fractal image of Christ Jesus.

A hard connection exists in Scripture between living in peace and keeping the commandments of God, with observing the Sabbath commandment being the most visible expression of believing God. Thus, what is the least of the commandments—the commandment that pertains to time, a created entity—

becomes the defining commandment that identifies who is and who is not of Israel. It isn't tassels that defines Israel, the nation now circumcised of heart, but the Sabbath, a day of the week that separates fathers from sons and mothers from daughters when Gentiles (peoples of *the nations*), by definition being outwardly uncircumcised, keep the precepts of the law and have their uncircumcision counted as circumcision (Rom 2:26–29).

If circumcision of the flesh held significance today, Muslims would have equal standing with Jews before God and Christians would have no standing. As it is, *Christians* are a lawless mob that has attempted to take the kingdom of God by force, with Muslims being equally lawless and Judaism being without belief and thus condemned by its unbelief. Even the Sabbatarian churches of God are plagued with unbelief, becoming living fossils in the evolutionary process of restoring knowledge of God lost by the Church in the centuries it lay dead as the corpse of Christ.

Jesus did not come to bring peace, but a sword (Matt 10:34) — He came to die so that men (and women) could live, not physically for they were already living physically, but live by having life as sons of God. Jesus came so that Israel might know its God. He came as a human being to deliver the words of the Most High, but in delivering the words of His Father, again speech-acts that came from heaven via the divine breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], words or speech beyond what can be expressed by the words of men, Jesus did many miracles that are not recorded in Scripture. The ones recorded, such as Jesus seven times healing on a Sabbath day, were written down so that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ. Healing comes via entering into God's presence, again what the Sabbaths of God represent.

The thieves and wolves preach, *Peace, peace*, when there is no peace; for Christianity is an emotionally (not physically) violent ideology that crucifies the inner self or nature; that tears families apart, with those born of God no longer doing their weekly shopping on the Sabbath or celebrating the holidays of this world but going it alone in a world ruled by disobedience and unbelief. Christianity requires of every disciple an element of the mental toughness that Jesus had ... it is not easy to buck society, former friends and biological family; it is not easy to rely on God when relying on self would seem to make more sense. It is not easy to celebrate the trials a disciple will inevitably experience as the Father prunes disciples that bear fruit (John 15:2) — trials don't come because a disciple isn't bearing the fruit of the spirit, but because the disciple does bear fruit. The disciple who doesn't bear fruit is cut off from Christ Jesus; this person's trials will seem to end, for this person is now spiritually dead. And the disciple who has been cut off will say some variation of, *The pressure is finally off*, when the disciple returns to being a part of this world.

The concept of trials coming to disciples bearing fruit circles back to the question of why doesn't the Gatekeeper prevent thieves and wolves from breaking into the sheepfold: it is the Father, the Gatekeeper, that does the pruning of disciples, stripping from disciples those things of this world that tether the disciple to this world, regardless of whether those things are physical or mental (e.g., family relationships). The thieves and wolves would like to keep the sheep in the sheepcote where they are easy prey; they would like to keep "Christians" in

the fellowships of this world where they can be devoured without any great expenditure of effort; they would like every Christian to remain penned in the Christian's local church where the disciple will be a *fish in a barrel*. The thieves and wolves don't want to see the coming of the Good Shepherd and the sheep following Him out of the sheepcote; so our thieves and wolves preach those things that will keep the sheep penned in disobedience even after the Gatekeeper has opened the gate for the Good Shepherd.

Ezekiel is commanded to prophesy against the shepherds of Israel ... if Jesus were a Shepherd like the shepherds of Israel, Jesus would have fed Himself rather than the sheep, but He is the Good Shepherd that feeds the flock—and feeds the flock by the flock hearing His voice.

Now we can return to Daniel's visions and the previous reading: there is but one kingdom of this world, not many kingdoms, with this kingdom given to the Son of Man a time, times, and half a time (1260 days) after the great horn or first horn of the king of Greece is suddenly broken. Oh, there are many fiefdoms, many houses, but there is only one kingdom, with this kingdom ruling over the mental typography of living creatures, not over geographical lands ... human kings and presidents rule over the fleshly bodies of men and women, but they do not rule over the minds of their subjects. If they did, there would never be any rebellion. Nor does God today rule over the minds of men and women. If He did, there would be no harm here on earth. All would have the mind of Christ. And the new covenant would be implemented.

Thieves and wolves hide in the darkness of the lie that Christians are today under the new covenant, but what are the contractual terms of the new covenant?

From Hebrews:

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord,
when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah,
not like the covenant that I made with their fathers
on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of
the land of Egypt.

For they did not continue in my covenant,
and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord.

For *this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
after those days, declares the Lord:*

*I will put my laws into their minds,
and write them on their hearts,*

and I will be their God,
and they shall be my people.

And *they shall not teach, each one his neighbor
and each one his brother, saying, "Know the Lord,"
for they shall all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest.*

For I will be merciful toward their iniquities,
and I will remember their sins no more. (8:8–12 emphasis
added)

The new covenant as given to the prophet Jeremiah from whom the writer of Hebrew quotes is as follows:

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law [Torah] within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (31:31–34)

To be of the Lord, the Lord first makes an overture to the person: He puts the Torah (the five books of Moses) into the Israelite, writing the Law onto hearts, an act that of itself would cause all to *Know the Lord*. If all know the Lord and have hearts like Moses had, then there will be no sin ... lawlessness will cease to exist except as an accidental happening. Simply by placing the Torah within Israel, the Lord will make an effective end to sin. The need to forgive iniquity and remember sin will be minimized; for the person under the new covenant will either believe the Lord or not believe the Lord. If this person believes the Lord, sin will lie dead inside the person, buried by the obedience of the person. If the person doesn't believe the Lord, a strong delusion (2 Thess 2:11–12) will be sent over the person so that he or she will not repent and turn to God and be saved. Death will come to the person before he or she dies physically—and this is directly analogous to the Father today cutting off branches that do not bear fruit in this era of grace.

In this present era, the sins of disciples are "covered" by the mantle or garment of Christ Jesus' righteousness. They are remembered, but not counted against the disciple as long as the disciple makes a practice of righteousness, of trying to keep the commandments. But even though the sins are today covered, if the disciple doesn't bear the fruit of the spirit (Gal 5:22–23) the Father will cut the disciple off from Christ Jesus, and once cut off by the Father, the disciple is permanently cut off as will be the case when a strong delusion is sent over those who do not believe the truth once the new covenant is implemented.

It is not enough to be born of God. It is not enough to come under grace even though Christ's righteousness (the reality of grace) is sufficient to save. The disciple still must bear fruit when it is not the season for fruit, or the Father will cut the disciple away, letting the disciple wither as a branch cut off from a vine. And this cutting off by the Father is especially evident within the Sabbatarian churches of God where thousands of still physically living disciples have spiritually withered and died, all the while vigorously denying that they are dead. But no growth has occurred within these disciples for upwards of thirty years. They are truly physically living fossils.

Do Christians today have the Torah written on hearts and placed within the person? Quick answer, Yes or no.

If Christians had the Torah written on their hearts and placed in their minds they would walk as Moses walked, and walk as Jesus walked; so the answer to the above question is that they do not have the law within them, with their failure to walk as Jesus walked being *prime facie* evidence that the commandments are not written on hearts.

Among Christians today, do their neighbors and brothers *know the Lord*? The answer is again, no! The purpose of Christian ministry is to teach their neighbor and brother to know the Lord, an unnecessary activity when the Torah is written on hearts. So when the writer of Hebrews says, a quarter century after Calvary, “what is becoming obsolete and growing old [the first covenant, the Passover covenant] is ready to vanish away” (8:13), the writer of Hebrews also says by implication that the first covenant has not yet vanished away but remains in effect although at anytime it could vanish away.

A repetitive question: when or at what time since Hebrews was written has the first covenant vanished away? The answer is that the first covenant has not yet vanished away but remains in the same state (status) as it was when Hebrews was written. It will vanish away when the second Passover occurs. Then, when Israel (the nation circumcised of heart) is liberated from indwelling sin and death, the first covenant made on the day when Israel left Egypt will have ended and Israel, filled with or empowered by the spirit of God, will be under the new covenant; for the filling with or empowerment by spirit will write the Torah on the hearts of Israel.

What Jesus says about the sheep hearing His voice and not the voices of thieves and wolves is why the thieves and wolves need the sheep to remain in the sheepcote (in the congregations of this world) where they cannot easily flee from those who would devour them ... Jesus said He had other sheep who were not then of Israel whom He must bring into one flock under one shepherd (John 10:16), with these other sheep then seeming to be Gentile disciples who as wild olive branches would be grafted onto the Root of Righteousness.

Until the fullness of the Gentiles (the nations) comes to God (Rom 11:25), with the Father drawing these Gentiles from the world in this era of grace, the seven endtime years of tribulation will not begin and natural Israel as the cultivated olive branches will not be grafted onto their own tree (v. 24).

Jesus kept Hanukkah (Feast of Dedication), with Jesus being the Christ, the temple of God, and with Jesus telling Pharisees that they were not part of His flock — Pharisees were already cut off from the Lord, a reality they would have denied as vigorously as today’s Christian theologians deny that they are of the Adversary. Pharisees were unable to hear Jesus’ voice as are today’s Christian theologians, and it is the same words that cannot be heard or believed: Jesus said to these Jews, “Is it not written in your law, “I said, you are gods”? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, “You are blaspheming,” because I said, “I am the Son of God”?” (John 10:34–36) ... Christian theologians will profess with their mouths that disciples are sons of God, but will then strongly deny that there is any Son of God but Christ Jesus. Their triune concept of God is a denial of God, Father and Son, with disciples being younger siblings (brothers) of the glorified Jesus (Rom 8:29). They hold

that Jesus as God is one with the Father, but that disciples are not one with the Father as Jesus is one with the Father. They apply the concept of numerical singleness to the linguistic icon “one” rather than unity, and they apply the concept of *individualness* to the icon “God” instead of *house*, for angels are also “sons of God” (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7) in that they have no parent but the Father and they are of the household of the Father, created to be servants in this household. Disciples actually have two parents, the first being the Logos [ὁ λόγος] who created all things (John 1:3), including the man Adam, and the second being the Father who gives life to the spiritually dead (i.e., the physically living sons of Adam). Thus, after being born of God through receiving a second breath of life (the first coming from Adam via *Elohim*, singular in usage, breathing into the man of mud’s nostrils; and the second coming from receiving the breath of the Father in Christ Jesus, the last Adam), disciples are nurtured in the womb of grace while they await a second spiritual birth when judgments are revealed and the mortal flesh either will or won’t put on immortality.

A human being is once born for the person has only one breath of life dwelling within the person, but a disciple is twice born of spirit, with the first birth coming when the Father raises the dead and with the second birth coming when the Son gives life to whom He will (John 5:21). But the thieves and wolves that break into the flocks of God deny that a human being must be twice born of spirit to enter heaven: they routinely hold that human beings are born with immortal souls that merely need to be regenerated by accepting Christ Jesus as the person’s savior, thereby making the person (every person) fully responsible for the person’s salvation prior to the person being drawn from this world by the Father.

Moses walked across water on dry land: the waters parted for him and for Joshua after him. But Jesus, a prophet like Moses, walked on the water without the waters parting, thereby visibly disclosing the relationship between Christ and Moses ... on the second day of the Genesis “P” creation account, the waters are divided, with “heaven” separating those waters of humanity born of God from the waters of humanity that have not been born of God. But God does not say that this second day is good; for the 1st-Century Church as the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27) died as did the physical body of Christ. The restoration of the endtime Church comes with the third day of this “P” creation account, and the defining feature of this third day is the parting of the water and emergence of dry land. The restoration of the endtime Church comes through Moses; for Jesus said to Pharisees, “If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writing, how will you believe my words” (John 5:46–47).

Even if endtime disciples hear the words of Jesus, unless they believe the writings of Moses they will not believe Jesus’ words. There is simply too much noise in the sheepcote; it is simply too difficult to separate Jesus’ voice from the cooing of the thieves and howls of the wolves. Only by returning to Moses will endtime disciples be able to separate the voice of Jesus from the baaing of the fat sheep that push against the lean sheep, shouldering them aside.

The lean sheep, human sheep (Ezek 34:31), are scattered abroad (v. 21), from where the Good Shepherd will gather them when the natural branches are again grafted onto the Root of Righteous ... in the third day reversed image of Israel being penned and Gentiles being sheep in other folds, natural Israel is presently

the scattered sheep and “Christians” are the sheep in the flock being devoured by thieves and wolves, theologians who say they see but who do not believe the writings of Moses. Christians are penned in denominations of fat sheep; Christians are the prey of the Adversary and of his ministers. They are the ones who fund the Adversary shooting fish in a barrel. They fund their own capture and enslavement.

Disciples are human sheep that follow the Lamb of God, their elder Brother who is the First of the firstfruits of God. And when the Endurance begins, the 144,000 virgins following the Lamb of God wherever He leads (Rev 14:1–5) are natural Israelites who have been grafted onto the Root of Righteous for the fullness of the nations will have come to God; for with the kingdom of this world being given to the Son of Man (Dan 7:9–14; Rev 11:15–18), the Son will baptize the world in spirit and the human nature of men (and women) will be changed. Even the nature of the great predators will change (Isa 11:6–9). Gentiles will no longer be Gentiles, but will be Christians that believe God, with one additional separation being made. Some of these Christians will not bear fruit—will be foolish virgins who do not have sufficient oil to last throughout the Endurance—and some will bear fruit for it has become the season for fruit.

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