

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 can God send a delusion?

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

Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of August 30, 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.

For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and *the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ. Therefore, *as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him*, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For *in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily*, and you have been filled in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. (Col 2:1–14 emphasis added)

In Christ resides the fullness of deity, according to the Apostle Paul whom no person in the 20th or 21st Century has seen face to face thus placing every Christian in a position similar to that of the holy ones at Colossae in the middle of the 1st-Century ... the fullness of deity didn't rest with or in Paul, or in Moses a millennium and a half earlier, or in Muhammad in the 7th-Century CE. The fullness of deity didn't reside in Joseph Smith in the 19th-Century CE, even though both Muhammad and Smith claimed to have entered

into the presence of God as Moses did atop Mount Sinai, where he saw the backside of God, a believable claim based upon the chirality that exists between what is physical and what is spiritual. Rather, the knowledge of God that both Smith and Muhammad claim came via revelation—Paul who also speaks of having a revelation claimed not to be able to reveal or talk about what he saw when he entered heaven, either bodily or not bodily, he not knowing which (2 Cor 12:2–4).

If Paul could not speak of what he saw, saying, “[H]e heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter” (2 Cor 12:4), why was it that Muhammad and Joseph Smith could speak of things that *man may not utter*?

Moses’ face shone for the remainder of his life from having entered into the presence of the Lord (Ex 34:29–35), the shine forming the physical manifestation of having entered into the presence of the Lord. It would therefore logically follow that for a person to spiritually enter into the presence of the Lord, the spirit of the man would need to be glorified, which comes only—again according to Paul—through the indwelling of Christ Jesus (Rom 6:23; 8:9–11). So for either Muhammad or Joseph Smith to have entered spiritually [in vision] into the presence of the Lord, either would have necessarily been born of spirit, with the glorified inner self of the person being what actually came before the throne of God.

If either Muhammad or Joseph Smith had been born of spirit, God would not have needed to communicate with either via visions, but could have communicated with either via the *Parakletos*, the spirit of truth. The presentation by both that knowledge of God came to them via vision rather than directly from God discloses that the knowledge both claim to have received wasn’t from God ... even John in his vision specifically says,

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His servants the things that must soon take place. *He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John*, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. (Rev 1:1–2 emphasis and doubled emphasis added)

The vision that John saw was from Christ Jesus even though it originated with the Father, and apparently came by way of an angel. The visions Daniel saw came via an angel. The visions Muhammad saw came via an angel. The visions Joseph Smith saw came via an angel. Visions come via angels even when the knowledge conveyed in them originates with the Most High God. And a third of the angels followed the Adversary in rebellion against God. So does a vision come via a faithful or an unfaithful angel? If the vision is not twice seen, it is not of God ... can one vision in a twice-seen vision go beyond its mate? Can a wife go beyond her husband and give birth to a son? The analogy isn’t perfect but is useful in showing the relationship between some twice-seen visions, as found in Daniel chapters seven and eight.

The classic twice-seen vision is that of Daniel seeing the same vision as Nebuchadnezzar saw (Dan chap 2), with this being the model that teaches endtime disciples how to “read” visions such as Joseph, son of Jacob, had before he was sold into slavery, then when he interpreted the visions of the cook and cupbearer, then the visions of Pharaoh.

John’s vision must necessarily repeat elements of Moses’ interaction with Pharaoh as well as Daniel’s visions if this vision is of the Lord—and it does, while going beyond Daniel’s visions concerning the same matters such as taking the kingdom of this world from the Adversary and his angels and giving the kingdom to the Son of Man (*cf.* Dan

7:9–14; Rev 11:15– 18, 12:7–12) Also compare Ex 15:12; Dan 2:34, 45; 9:26; Rev 12:16; Zech 14:4.

In creating an argument based upon revelation, what Paul had to do and what Muhammad and Joseph Smith did, those things outside the revelation need not be considered. But when the revelation comes via a vision or via many visions, those things outside the revelation bear heavily on whether the revelation originates with God or with the Adversary; for in all cases, the revelation via vision come through an angel, not directly from God.

To repeat, for those individuals whom God has withdrawn from this world by giving them the earnest of the spirit, thereby giving them indwelling eternal or heavenly life, God need not communicate with them via visions but can communicate directly with them via the *Parakletos*, the spirit of the truth.

Revelation either occurs or doesn't occur. If divine revelation occurs/occurred, the one to whom revelation is made becomes a conduit between God and humanity, hopefully faithfully disclosing what has been revealed. Again, therein lies the difficulty of divine revelation: can the person disclosing the revelation be trusted to faithfully speak for God? Israel didn't trust Moses, didn't believe Moses, and had to be repeatedly shown signs verifying that Moses spoke for the God of Abraham. But a common trait of humankind is that men [and women] will believe other men [or women] whereas they will not believe God, and did not believe Jesus the Nazarene, who was sent from God.

I [Jesus] can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of Him who sent me. *If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true.* There is another who bears witness about me, and I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true. You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Not that the testimony that I receive is from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. *For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me. And the Father who sent me has Himself borne witness about me.* His voice you have never heard, His form you have never seen, and you do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom He has sent. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. (John 5:30–40 emphasis added)

Divine revelation cannot have occurred to both Paul and Joseph Smith, or to both Muhammad and Joseph Smith, or to both Paul and Muhammad—unless, and this is a giant but improbable caveat, revelation occurred to deceive ...

Would God send revelation into this world for the purpose of deceiving a people? Perhaps the better question is, how does deception enter this world? How does deception work; for deception is believing as true what is not true. How does a person ascertain truth, which in Koine Greek is the negation of what has been concealed? *Truth* is, therefore, discovery that comes from peeling back layer after layer of ideological cover up grown in the garden of the Adversary. *Truth* will now cause eyes to water, tears to be shed, as pet beliefs are tossed into the garbage bucket of history as if they were onion skins to be composted.

What does Paul write about divine deception?

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to Him, *we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us*, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion [the Apostasy] comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only He who now restrains it will do so until He is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath [*to pneumatī*] of His mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of His coming. *The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore **God sends them a strong delusion**, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* (2 Thess 2:1–12 emphasis and double emphasis added)

God can and will send a strong delusion over those who choose to believe what is false ... He need not use a prophet to send a strong delusion over a person, but if a nation refused to love the truth and so be saved, might He use a prophet to send a strong delusion over the nation—a nation such as that descended from Ishmael, which was no nation but merely a collection of tribes fighting among themselves until formed into a nation by the prophet Muhammad?

Did *Ishmael* [the collective derived from descendants of Abraham's firstborn son] know "truth" about God so that this people could refuse to love the truth? Surely, Ishmael as a teenager and as a favorite of his father knew what Abraham, a prophet of the Lord (Gen 20:7), taught his household about the Lord; so it is reasonable to conclude that Ishmael knew the Lord when he as a young man (at least sixteen years old and probably nineteen) and his mother were sent away in a story that Muhammad relates outside of its context ... in both the Genesis chapter 21 version of Ishmael being sent away and in the Qur'an, Ishmael who was fourteen when Isaac was born, is sent away when Isaac is weaned and breeched as an infant. Ishmael becomes an infant in the arms of his mother, Hagar, when he is really a young man. Somehow, Ishmael replaced Isaac as the weaned heir of Abraham, thereby initiating the endtime conflict that will bring the Adversary's reign over humanity to its conclusion.

How did that happen? How did a young man able to defend himself with a bow suddenly become a helpless infant in the arms of his mother?

The spark that began the fire separating Jew from Muslim is retained in Scripture in the form of Ishmael and Isaac both being infants that played together when Isaac's breeching celebration occurred ... who inserted this element of white phosphorous between the sons of Abraham? Did God do so? Moses would have had no reason for doing so, and most likely no natural descendant of Isaac would have had a reason for doing so as long as the sons of Ishmael remained small warring tribes. The descendants of Esau posed more threat to the sons of Isaac through the era of the kings than did the sons of Ishmael, and earlier (under the Judges), the sons of Keturah—namely the Midianites—united as a nation against the sons of Isaac:

The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of [YHWH], and [YHWH] gave them into the hand of Midian seven years. And the hand of Midian overpowered Israel, and because of Midian the people of Israel made for themselves the dens that are in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds. For whenever the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. They would encamp against them and devour the produce of the land, as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel and no sheep or ox or donkey. For they would come up with their livestock and their tents; they would come like locusts in number—both they and their camels could not be counted—so that they laid waste the land as they came in. And Israel was brought very low because of Midian. And the people of Israel cried out for help to the LORD. (Jud 6:1–6)

Who caused Israel to live as vermin in dens? Hungry. Without herds or flocks. The Lord caused Israel to revert to animal behavior, and He did so because the people of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord—and why did the people of Israel do what was evil? Was the Lord not their God? Did their ancestors not call out to the Lord for help when enslaved in Egypt? Yet, what did the Lord say about their ancestors in Egypt?

Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: *On the day when I chose Israel, I swore to the offspring of the house of Jacob, making myself known to them in the land of Egypt; I swore to them, saying, I am [YHWH] your God. On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands.* And I said to them, Cast away the detestable things your eyes feast on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am [YHWH] your God. But they rebelled against me and were not willing to listen to me. None of them cast away the detestable things their eyes feasted on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. (Ezek 20:5–8 emphasis added)

And when did the Lord choose Israel:

When [YHWH] saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And He said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Then [YHWH] said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." (Ex 3:4–10)

There are difficulties in the text that are easily glossed over: the promise made to Abram [before aspiration was added to his name] would have the offspring of Abram being as numerous as stars in heaven, and being four hundred years absent from the land of Canaan:

But Abram said, "O Lord [YHWH], what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." And behold, the word of [YHWH] came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." And He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the

stars, if you are able to number them." Then He said to him, "So shall your offspring be." And he believed [YHWH], and He counted it to him as righteousness. And He said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to possess." But he said, "O Lord [YHWH], how am I to know that I shall possess it?" He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." And he brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away. As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. Then [YHWH] said to Abram, "Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete." (Gen 15:2–16)

Now, did the Lord choose Israel as the heir of Abram/Abraham when the Lord promised Abram that his heir would come from his loins and would be afflicted for four hundred years? Or did the Lord choose Israel as Abraham's promised heir when the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush? For the Lord spoke to the prophet Ezekiel about a specific day when He chose Israel, saying, *On the day when I chose Israel, I swore to the offspring of the house of Jacob, making myself known to them in the land of Egypt ... what about the offspring of the House of Israel? Did He not also swear to the offspring of the House of Israel on the day when He made Himself known to the offspring of the house of Judah?*

What's seen is the disinheritance of the offspring of the House of Israel—the northern ten tribes that formed the nation of Samaria—with the identifier <Israel> being given to the offspring of the House of Judah, the southern nation of Jerusalem after the northern kingdom was sent into captivity because of its idolatry; for elsewhere the prophet Ezekiel wrote,

The word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man, you dwell in the midst of a rebellious house, who have eyes to see, but see not, who have ears to hear, but hear not, for they are a rebellious house. As for you, son of man, prepare for yourself an exile's baggage, and go into exile by day in their sight. You shall go like an exile from your place to another place in their sight. Perhaps they will understand, though they are a rebellious house. You shall bring out your baggage by day in their sight, as baggage for exile, and you shall go out yourself at evening in their sight, as those do who must go into exile. In their sight dig through the wall, and bring your baggage out through it. In their sight you shall lift the baggage upon your shoulder and carry it out at dusk. You shall cover your face that you may not see the land, for *I have made you a sign for the house of Israel.*" And I did as I was commanded. I brought out my baggage by day, as baggage for exile, and in the evening I dug through the wall with my own hands. I brought out my baggage at dusk, carrying it on my shoulder in their sight. In the morning the word of [YHWH] came to me: "*Son of man, has not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, 'What are you doing?' Say to them, 'Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: This oracle concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are in it.' Say, 'I am a sign for you: as I have done, so shall it be done to them. They shall go into exile, into captivity.'* ...

And the word of [YHWH] came to me: "Son of man, eat your bread with quaking, and drink water with trembling and with anxiety. And say to the people of the land, Thus says the Lord [YHWH] concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with anxiety, and drink water in dismay. In this way her land will be stripped of all it contains, on account of the violence of all those who dwell in it. And the inhabited cities shall be laid waste, and the land shall become a desolation; and you shall know that I am the Lord." And the word of [YHWH] came to me: "*Son of man, what is this proverb that you have about the land of Israel, saying, 'The days grow long, and every vision comes to nothing'? Tell them therefore, 'Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: I will put an end to this proverb, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel.' But say to them, 'The days are near, and the fulfillment of every vision. For there shall be no more any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. For I am the Lord; I will speak the word that I will speak, and it will be performed. It will no longer be delayed, but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it, declares the Lord [YHWH]. And the word of [YHWH] came to me: 'Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, 'The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.' Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord [YHWH]: None of my words will be delayed any longer, but the word that I speak will be performed, declares the Lord [YHWH].'*" (Ezek 12:1–11, 17–28 emphasis added)

The teaching within the Sabbatarian Churches of God for the past eight decades that the prophecies of Ezekiel pertain to the descendants of the House of Israel, the descendants of the Lost Ten Tribes, principally the English-speaking peoples of the former British Empire and the United States of America was, is, and always has been a false teaching that functions as a delusion apparently sent by God over Christian disciples who didn't love the truth enough to peel back additional layers of deception, loosened by the disciple keeping the Commandments. Instead of finding the foundation of the temple of God that Paul laid in New Jerusalem, these disciples began construction of houses for themselves, houses without foundations, wickiups that sheltered a generation for a season, their pole frames covered by *here a little, there a little* exegesis.

Following the Apostasy of Day 220 in the Affliction—when the lawless one will declare himself God within the greater Christian Church that forms the temple of God (see 1 Cor 3:16–17; 2 Cor 6:16)—God will send a strong delusion over rebelling Christians that have committed blasphemy against the spirit, this delusion causing these rebels to sincerely believe their theology is of Christ Jesus and that they have no need to repent ...

But more of this in next Sabbath's Reading.

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