

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 not seeking to be known before it is time.

Weekly Readings

For the Sabbath of October 9, 2010

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.

After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him. Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." For not even his brothers believed in him. Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come." After saying this, he remained in Galilee. / But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private. The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and saying, "Where is he?" And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, "He is a good man," others said, "No, he is leading the people astray." Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of him.

About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. The Jews therefore marveled, saying, "How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?" So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority. The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood. Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?" The crowd answered, "You have a

demon! Who is seeking to kill you?” Jesus answered them, “I did one work, and you all marvel at it. Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well? Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.” (John 7:1–24)

No one works in secret if he or she seeks to be known openly—what if the person doesn't seek to be known openly? Does the Adversary work in secret? Does God work in secret? Does Christ seek to be known before the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man?

The novelist and moralist Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn once said that no one should publish until ten years after the person's death, that the publicity associated with publication hindered the production of good work from that time forward. And there is considerable wisdom in what Solzhenitsyn said ... what work could Jesus do when the publicity that came from healing a man on the Sabbath (John chap 5) caused crowds to follow Him?

Besides, this world can have only one king at a time: Jesus' contemporaries wanted to know if He was the Messiah, the one who would come to restore Israel. Two of John the Baptist's disciples heard John identify Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:35–36), and one of the two went to his brother and said, “We have found the Messiah” (v. 41), but it wasn't time for Jesus to be publicly identified as the Christ ... when Jesus asked His disciples who people said the Son of Man is (Matt 16:13), Jesus received the same sort of an answer as Christians give for who the two witnesses are: “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and other Jeremiah or one of the prophets” (v. 14). Jesus then rephrased His question and asked, “But who do you [His disciples, not the *people*] say that I am” (v. 15), with His rephrasing implying that He was the Son of Man. Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (v. 16). And Jesus told Peter that the Father had revealed this knowledge to him, Peter, and Jesus commanded His disciples to tell no one that He was the Christ.

Jesus did not seek to be openly known as the Messiah; for He did not come as a man to take the kingdom of this world away from the Adversary before it was time. He did not come as a man to be openly known as the Christ, the mistake that Christendom has made since the 1st-Century. He specifically commanded His disciples to stay in Jerusalem until they were clothed with power from on high:

Then he [Jesus] said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” (Luke 24:44–49)

Are disciples, today, clothed in power from on high? No, they are not. So why do *Christians* sally forth to take *Christ to the world* when their minds have not been opened to understand the Scriptures? Are they simply presumptuous asses, or are they deceitful workmen disguised as apostles of Christ, the servants of the Adversary disguised as servants of righteousness (from 2 Cor 11:13–15)?

If Jesus did not seek to be known as the Christ during His earthly ministry, when will He seek to be known? For it would seem that Jesus sought to be known before He was sacrificed as the Passover Lamb of God, a lamb appropriate to the size of the household of God: in entering Jerusalem shortly before the high priest entered the city on the 10th day of Abib—the high priest would have been riding a donkey and carrying the selected Passover lamb—Jesus deliberately attracted attention to Himself:

As he [Jesus] was drawing near [Jerusalem]—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.” He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.” (Luke 19:37–40)

Matthew records,

They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, “Who is this?” And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.” (Matt 21:7–11)

David wrote, “The Lord [YHWH] says to my Lord [Adonai]: / ‘Sit at my right hand, / until I make your enemies your footstool’” (Ps 110:1); so to publicly identify a man as the Son of David is to call the man the Messiah. And the crowds were identifying Jesus as the King of Israel and as the promised Messiah. Certainly if Jesus did not seek to be known, He would have quietly entered the city as He did six months earlier when He went up into the temple and began to teach about the middle of the Feast of Booths (John 7:14).

In the reading for the previous Sabbath (October 2, 2010), the timeline for Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection was laid-out: Jesus entered Jerusalem on the weekly Sabbath, the 10th day of Abib [April 21st Julian, 31 CE], five days before the Pharisees kept the Passover (John 12:1, 12), and He was crucified on Wednesday, the 14th day of Abib [April 25th Julian] (John 19:31, 42). He was then in the grave all day on the High Sabbath, Thursday, the 15th of Abib, and all day on Friday, the 16th day of Abib, and all day on the weekly Sabbath, the 17th day of Abib ... for the first three days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Jesus lay dead in the heart of the earth. Then on the fourth day of Unleavened Bread, the 18th day of Abib, before dawn, Jesus was raised from the dead and was gone from the tomb; so on the middle day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the hour when Sadducees would have offered the Wave Sheaf Offering [on the morrow after the Sabbath], Jesus ascended to heaven to be accepted as the reality of the waved sheaf, the first handful of ripe barley that must be waved before God before the harvest of firstfruits could begin.

As was introduced in last Sabbath's reading, the Feast of Tabernacles forms the mirror image of the Feast of Unleavened Bread; thus, when Jesus went up to the temple and began to teach about the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles [Booths] was when Jesus, six months later, would be resurrected from death and ascend to the Father, then return and on the same day, breathe on ten of His disciples and say, "Receive the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον — *pneuma hagion* or "breath holy"]" (John 20:22).

John writes, in establishing a timeline for his vision, that he is the brother and partner of disciples in the Affliction and Kingdom and Endurance (Rev 1:9) ... this is the order in which events described in the book of Revelation are presented: the Affliction consists of the first two woes (i.e., the 1260 days of the two witnesses' ministry) or chapters 4:1 through 11:14. The Kingdom then appears in chapter 11:15 through 12:17. And the Endurance begins with chapter 13:1 and continues through 20:3.

The Affliction is a time, times, and half a time long (from Dan 7:25), or again, 1260 days. The Endurance is a time, times, and half a time long (from Rev 12:14), or 42 months long (from Rev 13:5), which is 1260 days ... the Affliction forms the mirror image of the Endurance, with the man of perdition in the Affliction being a human being possessed by Satan and with the Antichrist in the Endurance being Satan cast from heaven and given the mind of a man. Sabbath observance in the Affliction will "mark" those who are of God for the kingdom of this world has not yet been taken from the four kings; whereas the tattoo of the cross will mark those who are of the Beast in the Endurance for the kingdom of the world will have been given to the Son of Man. Thus, the person who is not of the then-reigning king will be marked as *different*: the Sabbatarian in the Affliction will not be of the Adversary and the four underling kings and will be *different*, with this *difference* identifying the person as being obedient to God and the servant of obedience (Rom 6:16); nor will the person marked by the cross be of the Son of Man in the Endurance, for this person will serve Death, the fourth horseman of Revelation chapter 6 and fourth beast of Daniel chapter 7, as its willing servant.

When Jesus did not go up to the Feast of Booths six months before He entered Jerusalem to the crowd shouting, *Hosanna to the Son of David*—the Feast of Booths would have been held very late in 30 CE, and on rabbinical Judaism's errant calculated calendar, would have been held in the month *Heshvan*; for the month of *Aviv* did not begin hours before the vernal equinox but began after the equinox and began on or about April 22nd Julian; the new year began as late as a new sacred year will ever begin—

Because the sacred year would have begun very late in 30 CE, the stage was set to conceal the first Unleavened [when the Passover sacraments of bread and wine are to be taken] from the world, with Judaism doing this concealing. But this concealing also set the stage for the Second Passover liberation of Israel to occur on the same calculated calendar date and on the same weekday as when Jesus was crucified; so rabbinical Judaism's calculated calendar served God's purpose of concealing from the world what wasn't to be known by the world until the end of the age.

By the fall Feasts of 30 CE, Jesus would have known that His time was short, that He would be sacrificed as the Passover Lamb of God at the forthcoming Passover season. He was, by these fall feasts, three years into his earthly ministry, a length of time symbolically represented by the first three days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread [the three days when He would be dead in the heart of the earth] and by the first three days of the Feast of Tabernacles [the three days when He remained in Galilee]. These two three day periods

metaphorically represent the 1260 days of the Affliction ... Jesus' ministry changed on the fourth day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread in 31 CE; for on this fourth day, He ascended to heaven as the reality of the Wave Sheaf Offering then returned to convey the Holy Spirit [indwelling eternal life] to His disciples who, because they were now born of spirit [the breath of God] as sons of God, could understand spiritual things. And what Jesus conveyed to His disciples over the next forty days is not recorded in the gospels—it wasn't for the world to know or to discover accidentally until the time of the end.

In the timeline that John establishes for the seven year long [2520 day long] Affliction and Endurance, the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man at the end of day 1260 and at the beginning of day 1261 (i.e., on the doubled day 1260), the exact middle of the endtime years of tribulation. Thus Jesus ascends to heaven on the day representing when the kingdom of this world will be given to the Son of Man—and on the day when Jesus went up to the temple and began teaching in the previous Feast of Tabernacles.

Now, the significance imbedded in Jesus going up to teach at the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles is manifested in the last great day of the feast:

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit [τοῦ πνεύματος], whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:37–39)

When the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man, it will henceforth remain with the Son of Man. It will never be given to anyone else. But when the kingdom is given to the Son of Man, the Messiah will not have come as Lord of lords and King of kings. Rather, the Messiah coming as Lord of lords and King of kings remains 1260 days in the future—

The Millennium—the Messiah's 1,000 year long reign as King of kings and Lord of lords—doesn't begin when the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man, what Jesus knew and what is revealed to John in his vision. The Feast of Tabernacles doesn't represent Christ's millennial reign as Sabbatarian churches of God have errantly taught for three-quarters of a century. The Last Great Day represents the Day of the Lord, Christ's millennial reign, when the Adversary is bound in the bottomless pit so that he cannot deceive anyone for a thousand years.

What Jesus reveals by not going up to the Feast of Tabernacles until the middle of the Feast is that only one king at a time can rule over the kingdom of this world; that as long as dominion over humankind remains with the Adversary, Jesus isn't known by the world. Not even His brothers [corresponding to endtime, born-of-God disciples] believe Him; for the world cannot truly hate Christians to the point where they will mass murder them in this present age. Certainly the world will kill a few self-identified Christians here, and a few there, but when was the last time that a Christian was killed for keeping the Sabbath? It has been a while. But the time is coming and is almost upon us when Sabbatarian Christians will again be killed for Christ Jesus' name sake.

If Jesus had sought to be known in the first three years of His ministry [from when His ministry began about Fall Feast in 27 CE to Fall Feast 30 CE], why did He spoke to the crowds that followed Him in parables (Matt 13:10–11), and why did He speak to His chosen disciples in figures of speech [metaphors] (John 16:25)?

Parables are a special case/type of metaphoric speech.

If Jesus truly sought to be known by Israel, He would have spoken to the crowds in similar blunt speech as John the Baptist used:

But when he [John] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." (Matt 3:7–10)

And Jesus' ministry would have lasted about as long as John's lasted, which apparently wasn't a year: Herod didn't take kindly to being called an adulterer. And the Pharisees in Jerusalem didn't take kindly to being called a brood of vipers.

When John writes, "For not even his brothers believed in him" (7:5), John doesn't necessarily mean that Jesus' brothers believed the miracles were not real or that the Jews didn't intend to kill Him. Jesus' brothers didn't understand, didn't believe that Jesus was the Messiah. They couldn't imagine the Messiah being as *ordinary* as Jesus was—

If this is the end of the age (it is the contention of *The Philadelphia Church* that it is), then the two witnesses, the two olive trees, the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth (Rev 11:3–4) dwell somewhere on the earth today ... why doesn't the world know who these two witnesses are? Is it that they do not want to be known before their 1260 days of prophesying begin?

If the two witnesses were known before when the glorified Jesus grants them authority to prophesy, to call forth plagues of every sort, the world would seek to discredit them to such an extent that they would never be believed.

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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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