

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 being defiled by touching a dead body.

Weekly Readings

For the Sabbath of October 15, 2011

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 he had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue." And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well. Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was

being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!" And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.

The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'"

In that hour he [Jesus] healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, "'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.' I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." (When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John, but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.) "To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? They are like children sitting in the

marketplace and calling to one another, "'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.' For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is justified by all her children." (Luke 7:1–35)

1.

More than a prophet — prophets of Israel wore hair coats: “Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey” (Matt 3:4). Except for the animal from which the hair for his coat came, John wore the garb of Elijah, but did none of the miracles that first Elijah, then Elisha twice over did when wearing Elijah's hair coat.

Wearing a hair coat was a *sign* that identified its wearer as a prophet of the Lord. The coat or mantle [cloak] as a sign could be *read* by everyone observing the prophet from as far away as the prophet could be seen in the distance. But wearing the hair coat required that what the person prophesied be true, that events prophesied shortly come to pass (or as in the case of Jeremiah who prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem for 23 years before the city was razed, come to pass in the person's lifetime).

Why were hair coats the garb of prophets? And why camel's hair, with camels being unclean as opposed to sheep [wool] or goat hair?

The foreskin of the male is his *natural* skin covering that is analogous to the skin clothing made by the Lord for Adam and Eve before they were driven from the Garden of Eden ... the woman was deceived, the man was not; therefore, the woman's *covering* continues to be her husband, with the skin garment the Lord made for the woman representing her husband.

The man was not deceived; hence, every human male is born with a skin covering of his *head*, a covering that is pared away for males that enter into covenant with the Lord according to the terms given to Abraham that Abraham walk uprightly and be blameless before the Lord (Gen 17:1–2) ... a covenant made with the flesh is ratified in the flesh, with the shedding of blood being the sign that the covenant is of the flesh and is an earthly thing and is temporary even though the covenant extends to the end of the age; for the flesh itself is temporary, a shadow and type of the heavenly body that the son of God will receive when judgments are revealed.

The skins of sheep and goats are *hairy*, in that sheep have wool that is sheared, carded, spun, and woven into fabric from which a garment can be made, a garment that covers a person's nakedness. If the guard hairs are left in the wool, the yarn creates a coarse, scratchy, and virtually indestructible fabric. And the same applies but more so for goats, with the indestructibility of the garment forming a metaphor for the enduring relevance of the words of the prophet that

are the words of God passing through a secondary voice, thus creating double-voice discourse.

In all cases, the words of the prophet claim to be double-voice discourse. If the Lord had/has not sent the prophet, then words that by their presentation claim to be double-voice discourse are not and do not come to pass. The discourse was delivered by a false prophet, with the modern equivalent being every Christian teacher or pastor who finds Rome, the Roman Empire, the Roman Church, or the Roman See in the visions of Daniel. Thus, the false prophet is a liar and is of the Adversary, a liar and murderer from the beginning.

A hair coat is a garment made with the animal's guard hairs included in the spinning of the yarn and weaving of the fabric; therefore, a hair coat is an uncomfortable garment to wear ... being a prophet of the Lord was an uncomfortable position to be in, for prophets weren't sent to Israel until the people had gone astray. Thus, most everyone in Israel would be and was against the prophet, who was under obligation to the Lord to deliver an unpopular message to people who didn't want to hear that destruction would soon befall them if they did not repent and return to the Lord.

Now, what about a coat of camel hair ... what was an Israelite supposed to do if he or she touched the carcass, the hair of an unclean/common animal?

Whoever touches anything that is unclean through contact with the dead or a man who has had an emission of semen, and whoever touches a swarming thing by which he may be made unclean or a person from whom he may take uncleanness, whatever his uncleanness may be—the person who touches such a thing shall be unclean until the evening and shall not eat of the holy things unless he has bathed his body in water. (Lev 22:4–6 emphasis added)

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And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them, "Speak to the people of Israel, saying, These are the living things that you may eat among all the animals that are on the earth. *Whatever parts the hoof and is cloven-footed and chews the cud, among the animals, you may eat. Nevertheless, among those that chew the cud or part the hoof, you shall not eat these: The camel, because it chews the cud but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you. And the rock badger, because it chews the cud but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you. And the hare, because it chews the cud but does not part the hoof, is unclean to you. And the pig, because it parts the hoof and is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud, is unclean to you. You shall not eat any of their flesh, and you shall not touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you. (Lev 11:1–8 emphasis added)*

Again, the hair coat that was the sign of John being a prophet of God, a prophet like Elijah the Tishbite who wore a garment of hair and a belt of leather around his waist (2 Kings 1:8). However, the sign, itself, the coat of camel's hair, makes John ceremonially unclean/common and unable to take of the sacrifices in the temple. Thus, for John the Baptist to be more than a prophet to Israel, John would need to be a prophet to all those who were defiled through being made

common via sin as he was made *common* or unclean by the hair coat he wore as a sign of being a prophet.

Hold the concept in your mind for a moment: the very sign that John was a prophet—his coat of camel’s hair and leather belt—caused John to be defiled and separated from the temple as Daniel’s castration and imprisonment in Babylon caused Daniel to be defiled and unable to enter the temple if one had still existed in Jerusalem ... the *sign* defiled John, and because John was made common by the sign or symbol or sacrament of his calling [i.e., the hair coat he wore], John would need to *bathe* as in baptizing in full immersion in water to be made clean. But upon rising from the water, John would again be made *common* by the garment he wore in the same way that Israel’s sacrifices in the temple left the people of Israel defiled through the mere existence of the temple with its Holy Place and Most Holy Place.

Because the sign that John wore disclosing he was a prophet after the order of Elijah—again his coat of camel’s hair—caused John to be ceremonially unclean or common, *John* can be read in double-voiced discourse as an in-text narrator telling the people of Israel to repent of their evil ways and wrongdoing because sacrifices at Herod’s temple could not cleanse them; thus, they were condemned to remain outside the camp of Israel until they bathed in baptism, and brought to the Lord the offering of repenting bitterly for their sins.

But even after repentance and baptism, Israel would be defiled as John was defiled by the sign that he was to prepare the way of the Lord as a type of Elijah. Israel could not prevent being defiled ... as in the case of the Holy Place in the temple’s very existence signifying that the way to God was closed to Israel (Heb 9:8–9), John’s coat of camel’s hair signified that Israel could not be cleansed by bathing, by washings, by baptism, or even by repentance. Thus, the baptism of John was of far more importance than Pharisees understood, of more importance than Christians have understood; for wearing the hair coat of a prophet has moved from covering the fleshly body of a prophet not born of God as a son [not born of the Holy Spirit — πνεῦμα ἄγιον] to covering the living inner self of the latter day prophet through the outer name, the surname, given to the endtime prophet functioning as a coat of hair (let the Christian who understands this mystery, this sacrament, keep what the Christian understands to him or herself in the way that Jesus strictly charged His disciples to tell no one that He was the Christ — Matt 16:20).

John the Baptist rewrote the *role of prophet* in Israel through wearing a camel’s hair coat rather than a coat of goat’s hair, but the larger rewriting of roles was that of the high priest, with this rewriting coming from Christ Jesus, who *came up to the funeral bier and touched it and said, “Young man, I say to you, rise,” and the dead man sat up and began to speak* (Luke 7:14–15) ...

According to Moses,

Whoever touches the dead body of any person shall be unclean seven days. He shall cleanse himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, and so be clean. But if he does not cleanse himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not become clean. Whoever touches a dead person, the body of anyone who has died, and does not cleanse himself, defiles the tabernacle of the

LORD, and that person shall be cut off from Israel; because the water for impurity was not thrown on him, he shall be unclean. His uncleanness is still on him.

This is the law when someone dies in a tent: everyone who comes into the tent and everyone who is in the tent shall be unclean seven days. And every open vessel that has no cover fastened on it is unclean. Whoever in the open field touches someone who was killed with a sword or who died naturally, or touches a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. For the unclean they shall take some ashes of the burnt sin offering, and fresh water shall be added in a vessel. Then a clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water and sprinkle it on the tent and on all the furnishings and on the persons who were there and on whoever touched the bone, or the slain or the dead or the grave. And the clean person shall sprinkle it on the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day. Thus on the seventh day he shall cleanse him, and he shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and at evening he shall be clean. If the man who is unclean does not cleanse himself, that person shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly, since he has defiled the sanctuary of the LORD. Because the water for impurity has not been thrown on him, he is unclean. And it shall be a statute forever for them. The one who sprinkles the water for impurity shall wash his clothes, and the one who touches the water for impurity shall be unclean until evening. And whatever the unclean person touches shall be unclean, and anyone who touches it shall be unclean until evening. (Num 19:11–22)

When men from John came and asked Jesus if He was the one who is to come, Jesus, “in that hour, healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. And he answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me’” (Luke 7:21–23).

The men of Israel who were bearing the funeral bier of the dead young man would have been unclean for seven days—and Jesus by touching the funeral bier would have been unclean. Jesus would also have been unclean by touching lepers, by touching the blind, the lame, the deaf, and especially by touching the dead; so the devout of Israel would have cause for declaring Jesus a sinner. But it was Jesus who, by touching the dead and the defiled, separated Himself from outwardly devout men of Israel, and reinforced this separation by declaring, *And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.*

In a similar but not identical manner, Jesus was defiled by doing good as John was defiled by his camel’s hair coat: Jesus’ doing good—His healing of the blind, the lame, lepers, the deaf, and raising the dead—were the outward sin that He was the one for whom Israel had waited as John’s camel hair coat was the sign that John was a prophet and more than a prophet, with this *more that a prophet* pertaining to what “camel hair” represented.

By signifying through the *sign* that even after repenting, the fleshly body of the baptized sinner remained defiled by sin, John the Baptist delivered to Israel the message that repentance alone was not enough to cleanse the nation that was to God as common or unclean flesh was to them ... an endtime Christian needs to take care that he or she doesn't succumb to eisegesis, the introduction of one's own ideas/meanings into the text, for John's hair coat could signify that a Second Passover liberation of Israel would be needed to free the nation from the type of defilement that John would experience in putting on his camel hair coat after bathing, the type of defilement that would come from the living inner self *touching* the fleshly body in which it dwells along with sin and death.

The baptized person emerges from baptism just as *defiled* as he or she was when entering the water; for hearts are not cleansed with water, but with a mental journey of faith comparable to Abraham's physical journey of faith from Ur of the Chaldeans to Haran, then on to the land of Canaan. The flesh is not freed from indwelling sin and death with water, but by being filled-with and empowered by the divine breath of God. And the spirit/breath of God [πνεῦμα Θεοῦ] isn't received via baptism and a prayer of faith, but via the Father drawing the person from this world through giving to the person the earnest of eternal life (i.e., the indwelling of His breath in the breath of Christ). Rather, baptism signifies that the person has taken judgment upon him or herself, with judgment also being taken upon the person who claims to understand the mystery [μυστήριον] of the sacraments of the Christian Church ... the *Christian* who professes that Jesus is Lord and believes in his or her heart that the Father raised Jesus from death isn't automatically saved, but does automatically take judgment upon him or herself.

Christianity cannot be likened to taking a high school diploma or a Bachelor degree where, when the person completes a proscribed amount of coursework, the diploma or degree is earned. Rather salvation is the gift of God given through the indwelling of Christ Jesus in the person. If, in this present era, the Father does not choose to draw a person from this world, that person can desire the Holy Spirit, desire a relationship with Christ, can even sincerely believe the person has a relationship with Christ, but because the person doesn't walk as Jesus walked, doesn't practice righteousness but continues to transgress one or more of the commandments thereby making a practice of sinning—because the person denies Christ Jesus through denying that the Logos, the One who entered His creation as His only Son, was the Creator of all that has been made—the Christian reveals to the holy ones that he or she has not yet been born of spirit but is to Christ as enslaved Israel in Egypt was to Moses.

There can be no debate about whether a Christian has or has not been born of God: the Christian whose mind is set on the things of this world regardless of whether those things are political or matters of prosperity **is not** born of God. The Christian who is concerned about how Jesus' name is pronounced is concerned about a thing of this world and **is not** born of God. Likewise, the Christian who desires the finer things of this world *is a spiritual bastard*, claiming God as his or her Father but serving the Adversary as one of his sons. The Christian who teaches without being called to teach—and Christians teaching without being called to teach are too many to number—*is a spiritual bastard*. The

Christian who turns to a person not called to teach and honors this person as his or her teacher **is not** born of God, but is enslaved by the Adversary and will soon be sacrificed as a warning to others not to follow this particular person.

The Apostle Paul's gospel was simple: "For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified" (Rom 2:12–13).

It doesn't matter whether a person is or isn't under the Law; it doesn't matter whether a person is or isn't born of spirit, the sinner will perish for it is those who are *doers of the law that will be justified*. ... But the person who has truly been born of God doesn't practice sinning, transgressing the Law, for the seed, the spirit of Christ dwells in the person (1 John 3:9). Therefore, whoever transgresses the Sabbath by conducting his or her mundane affairs on the seventh day reveals that he or she remains a bondservant of the Adversary; whoever bears false witness about him or herself, claiming to be a teacher of Israel when this person has not been called to teach reveals that he or she remains a bondservant of the Adversary; whoever makes an idol of a thing of this world, or makes an idol of a linguistic icon used to represent the Father and the Son reveals that he or she remains a slave of the Adversary.

Jesus told the men who came from John that blessed was the person not offended by Him, Jesus, who touched a dead body and returned life to that dead body and who did not cleanse Himself as proscribed by Moses ... every Christian touches a dead body when the Christian touches his or her own fleshly body, but, some will argue, this isn't what Moses meant. What did Moses mean? That the dead body had to be a corpse as Adam was before *Elohim* [singular in usage] breathed into this man of mud's nostrils? What about the man thrown atop the dead body of Elisha? He was a corpse as Adam was: "And as a man was being buried, behold, a marauding band was seen and the man was thrown into the grave of Elisha, and as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet" (2 Kings 13:21).

A Christian can get him or herself tied into theological knots applying Moses, a shadow and type of Christ Jesus, to the Church if the Christian is not truly born of God: if a dead person lives again when touched, was the dead person really dead? And if he or she were really dead, how can the one touching the dead person be defiled before God ... being defiled according to Moses must be reevaluated in light of Jesus touching the lame, lepers, the blind, deaf, and the dead, healing all as a sign that He is the Messiah, the one who is to come; the one who breaks the barrier that had separated Jew from Gentile, the Circumcised in the flesh from the Uncircumcised in the flesh (see Eph 2:12–16). In Jesus' flesh, He destroyed barriers between defiled and undefiled that pertained to the flesh, with John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus to do so by wearing a coat of camel hair rather than goat hair.

The flesh of every person, Jew or Gentile, is defiled through the indwelling of sin and death in the flesh until the Second Passover liberation of Israel, the message that John the Baptist conveyed in the sign disclosing that he was ordained to be more than a prophet—

The sign that the flesh of every person is defiled before and after repentance and baptism brought to an end the earthly covenants contained in the Law and the Prophets: “For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John” (Matt 11:13). Only the reality of the heavenly covenants—those covenants not ratified by the shedding of blood—remained, with the entirety of the Book of Deuteronomy forming the shadow and copy of the heavenly Moab covenant, the covenant for which the glorified Christ Jesus is the mediator.

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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](#)]