

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 healed from death."

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

Weekly Readings

For the Sabbath of October 31, 2015

Continued from October 24, 2015

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.

I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches. (Rev 1:17–20)

The "keys of Death and Hades" will "unlock" ^{3.} Death and Hades so that those who are locked in death; those who are in the grave can escape, meaning that *death* is not a permanent state of being for those in the grave.

James asked,

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. *Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith **will save** the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up.* And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. (Jas 5:13–15 emphasis added)

The prayer of faith will save the one who is sick; the Lord will raise this one up, and if this one has committed sins, the person will be forgiven ... the passage doesn't say that the person will be healed from physical ailments—that reading is an assumption based on not believing John's Gospel.

This passage in James' epistle has traditionally been interpreted to mean that calling upon the elders of the Church, their prayers and anointing with oil will result in physical

healing of whatever ails the person, but again, the passage really doesn't say this. Rather, the passages says what John's Jesus took the ten disciples when He breathed on them on the day of the Wave Sheaf Offering:

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive spirit holy. *If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.*" (John 20:19–23 emphasis added)

Of the Twelve called by Jesus, only Judas Iscariot, the betrayer, and Thomas were not present when Jesus "breathed" on His disciples and directly transferred to them His breath, the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] in which was the spirit of God [*pneuma Theou*]. The glorified Jesus didn't breathe on His disciples an exhalation of air molecules for He was glorified; He was a spirit being that could pass through closed doors without opening them. He was not a *nephesh*, a breathing creature as the first Adam was; as the beasts of the field are. He was like angels; like God. Therefore, when the glorified Jesus breathed on His disciples, He transferred to them the spirit of God, the Holy Spirit [*pneuma 'agion*] thereby giving to them spiritual birth, a second "breath" of life. Hence, from the moment Jesus breathed on the ten, these ten disciples were born of spirit; again born [*anagennesas* — from 1 Pet 1:3], according to God's, to Christ Jesus' great mercy.

But John's Jesus after giving spiritual birth to the ten, gave to His disciples authority to forgive or withhold forgiveness of sin, meaning that if a person not necessarily born of spirit calls upon the disciples—the elders of the Church—and asks to be anointed with oil and asks for prayers to said for the person, the person (even though not drawn from this world) will have the person's sins forgiven and will be healed from death, not necessarily from the physical affliction that has come upon the person.

Healing ministries are based upon a lie, that Jesus came to physically save human persons ... He came to save humanity from the terminal illness called "death," from which no human person can recover without divine intervention.

The Apostle Paul says of himself,

To keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. *Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me.* But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Cor 12:7–10 emphasis added)

If the glorified Christ didn't take from Paul the thorn of the flesh, a messenger of Satan (an interesting juxtaposition), then why would Christ heal any person in this

present era ... during Jesus' earthly ministry, no person other than Himself was born of spirit; for the spirit hadn't been given. No person was healed from death although a few were promised healing from death, usually said to be resurrection from death. But sin, a major thorn in the flesh, prevented the promise of resurrection from death from being extended to the person. A death had to pay the penalty of death that came with sin. And the death of a lamb or of a goat couldn't remove this thorn from the flesh of the person.

Apparently Paul had weak eyes; apparently Paul's thorn in the flesh was an affliction of his eyes that permitted the Second Sophist novelist writing Acts to invent the scene of scales causing physical blindness (as an allegory for spiritual blindness) to fall from Paul's eyes. But the "cure" for spiritual blindness is receipt of spiritual birth; for with spiritual birth, the person receives the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:16). Paul didn't need to be able to see other than to do physical work at which he supported himself. So there was no need for the glorified Christ to remove from Paul's flesh the messenger from Satan.

A reasonable reading of what Paul wrote about the thorn in his flesh being a messenger from Satan permits all physical ailments to be messengers from Satan, with these ailments originating with Satan and his rebellion against God. If this is the case, then Satan and his ministers, his earthly servants, can remove these thorns from the fleshly bodies of human persons ... these thorns become like voodoo pins stuck in a voodoo doll.

When the glorified Jesus breathed on the ten, He gave to the ten (all who were then born of spirit) authority not to heal fleshly bodies but to forgive sins, transgressions of the Law resulting from unbelief; *i.e.*, not believing God, Father and Son. And where this becomes important is in the 220 days preceding the Apostasy Paul references (2 Thess 2:3).

Once a person is filled with the spirit of God, Christ Jesus will not and does not cover the transgressions of this person; once a Christian is filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God, the Christian is not covered by either death [his or her still dead inner self] or by grace, the garment of Jesus' righteousness. The Christian is covered by his or her own obedience of God, obedience produced by manifested belief of God. The Christian has no other spiritual covering, except as the Christian calls upon the elders of the Assembly and asks that the elders anoint with oil and pray for the person.

The elders of the Church will be the Elect, those individuals already born of spirit, mostly older individuals a long time in the faith, individuals having acquired spiritual maturity and the wisdom of this world ... the elders of the Church will be "elderly." They will not be impressed by the affluence of this world; by the injustices of this world; by power exerted in this world. They simply won't be impressed by any attribute of the world. Thus, they will be able to make informed decisions about forgiving sin.

Following the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel, the Elect will have to make many decisions about withholding forgiveness or forgiving sin; for the default position is that any transgression of the Law [post Second Passover] will be blasphemy against the spirit that fills the Christian. Therefore, the person sick unto the second death desperately needs to call upon the elders of the Church for healing. Otherwise, the Christian—without any further sacrifice available to the person—will be condemned to the lake of fire.

And within the scope of the Apostasy, those Christians who truly don't realize that they have worshiped a false Christ for, likely, generations will not realize how far they are from God even after the Law has been written on their hearts, a euphemistic expression for their inner selves ... it will be difficult for Christians to accept the reality that God, Father and Son, did nothing to stop Christian idolatry for nearly two millennia. And that is what greater Christendom practices: idolatry through worshiping a "Christ" that isn't Christ Jesus, a "God the Father" that isn't God in a manner analogous to Israel, camped around the base of Mount Sinai, having Aaron cast for the people a gold calf, and the people identifying the calf as the god [*elohim*] that brought the people out from Egypt, a nonsense identification unless the people of Israel truly believed that the Canaanite deity *Toru El* was the God of Abraham, the God Abraham worshiped when he planted "a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and called there on the name of [*El olam*], the Everlasting God" (Gen 21:33).

When Israel served Pharaoh as slaves in Egypt, Israel was not physically free to openly worship the God of Abraham. But worse than Israel not being physically free, Israel was not mentally free ... whether Israel wanted or not, Israel served the idols of Egypt, with the Lord telling the prophet Ezekiel centuries later,

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 the LORD 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 20:6–8)

Why? Why did Israel not believe the Lord?

When the God of Abraham told Israel to *cast away detestable things and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt*, Israel cast nothing away but rather taught their children to worship the idols of Egypt—and their children taught their children who in turn taught their children until there was no distinction between Israel and the remnant of the Canaanite people Israel hadn't killed when Israel entered the Promised Land.

Today, Christians worship the "Christ" their parents worship, worshiped, going all the way back to the mid 1st-Century; the "Christ" that came into existence when Jesus delayed His return and the people didn't know what had become of Him as the people of Israel didn't know what had become of the man Moses when he entered into the cloud. After all, the people of Israel really didn't know Moses who had in his first eighty years little interaction with his people Israel. So when Moses disappeared, the people turned to the deity they believed was the God of Abraham, the Canaanite Creator of everything, *Toru El*, the *Bull El*.

The Apostasy of day 220 of the Affliction, the first 1260 days of the seven endtime years, has as its earthly shadow and type Israel's rebellion against the Lord in the wilderness of Paran (Num chap 14). The rebellion of Israel at Mount Sinai, therefore, forms the shadow and type of an earlier rebellion of greater Christendom against God, a rebellion that immediately follows the Law being written on hearts and placed in minds

so that all of greater Christendom knows the Lord. This rebellion will suck into it Christians that really don't want to rebel ...

Between the Second Passover liberation of a second Israel from indwelling sin and death and the Apostasy of day 220, there will be many mini rebellions by Christians; for the rebellion when the spies returned from the Promised Land was Israel's tenth rebellion, not the second or the third ... in this world, a shadow doesn't necessarily serve as a first referent for a phenomenon in the Apostle Paul's dual referent schema: the Apostasy comes via unbelief, the absence of faith [*pisteos*], as is seen in type when the children of Israel rebelled against the Lord a tenth time and refused to enter the Promise Land when entrance still stood.

Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night. And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why is the Lord* bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" And they said to one another, "Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt." Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the people of Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, "The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord* delights in us, He will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord*. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the Lord* is with us; do not fear them." Then all the congregation said to stone them with stones. But the glory of [*YHWH*] appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel. And [*YHWH*] said to Moses, "How long will this people despise me? *And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them?* I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they." (Num 14:1–12 emphasis added)

* —the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* was considered too holy to utter. No attempt to pronounce *YHWH* would have been made even before Israel returned from Babylon; for the Tetragrammaton was an unpronounced linguistic determinative before scriptural redaction in Babylon.

The nation of Israel that left Egypt following their Passover liberation did not believe the Lord regardless of the miracles witnessed. Apparently, they had no frame of reference in which they could equate miracles with the Lord. Crossing the Sea of Reeds on dry ground was without significance for this nation—and that should cause endtime disciples to reconsider the Moses narrative, with the Psalmist shifting referents and voices when he described what happened:

Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation!

Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving;
 let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!
 For the Lord is a great God,
 and a great King above all gods.
 In His hand are the depths of the earth;
 the heights of the mountains are His also.
 The sea is His, for He made it,
 and His hands formed the dry land.
 Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
 let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!
 For He is our God,
 and we are the people of His pasture,
 and the sheep of his hand.
 Today, if you hear His voice,
 do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,
 as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,
 when your fathers put **me** to the test
 and put **me** to the proof though they had seen **my** work.
 For forty years *I* loathed that generation
 and said, "They are a people who go astray in their heart,
 and they have not known **my** ways."
 Therefore I swore in **my** wrath,
 "They shall not enter my rest." (Ps 95:1–11)

Indented lines are spiritual portions of thought couplets; plus change of speakers/voice is emphasized by bold faced font. This change of voices establishes the permanency of this nation of Israel not entering into the Lord's rest, heaven, a permanency seen today by observant Jews, heeding the commands of Moses, thereby not kindling a fire on the Sabbath (see Exodus 35:3).

The Psalmist separates his praise of the Lord from the unbelief of the nation that left Egypt and that had been, at the time, physically dead for centuries but not forgotten. **To the Psalmist, remembrance of the generation of Israel's forefathers that rebelled in unbelief against the Lord still lived in death. And to portray this separation between life and belief from death and unbelief, the Psalmist adopts the voice of the Lord as if he, the Psalmist, has seen a vision.**

Writers, poets craft text from words, laying line upon line as if their constructions were brick edifices instead of constructions of ephemeral sound that, when well done, will outlast any brick building. It is illiterate men (and women) who fail to recognize the techniques employed by poets to create the structure upon which their textuality is plastered ... a written text differs from a spoken text as seen in Psalm 95, in which the Psalmist by way of his styling brings in the Lord to speak direct words to auditors, words that pertain to the nation of Israel that left Egypt. And these words were picked up in the epistle to the Hebrews and transported into the 1st-Century CE, from where they are again picked up and as if stone manuports carried into 21st-Century theological discourse where they rest on the temple foundation that Paul laid.

Did the Psalmist have a vision that caused him to shift internal narrators, shift away from the voice of a human collective [*us*] and shift to the Lord [*me*]? Three millennia after the fact, we cannot know with any degree of certainty if the Psalmist had a vision, but we can recognize the redaction of the Psalm that has occurred sometime before the Septuagint was translated from texts that apparently no longer exist. And with this redaction, we should realize that the Psalm isn't an infallible text, but is an inspired artifice that serves as a second witness against the nation of Israel that left Egypt behind Moses. As such, the Psalm *testifies* in advance against those Christians who, because of their unbelief, will commit blasphemy against the spirit on a particular day, a Sunday, 220 days following the Second Passover liberation of Israel.

Why many of Israel's rebellions in the wilderness aren't referents for the Apostasy is that post Second Passover Christians call upon the Elect to be anointed with oil—

Spiritually, nothing is established by the testimony of one witness. A second witness is needed. And Psalm 95 serves as that second witness when it comes to the unbelief of Israel that prevented this nation from entering the Promised Land ... again, the textuality of Psalm 95 forms a red carpet that if tread-upon will lead Christians to their death via their hubris.

Again, this Reading will be continued in the Reading for next Sabbath.

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