

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 Moses is the little scroll.

Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of November 5, 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.

Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. He had a little scroll open in his hand. And *he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land*, and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring. When he called out, the seven thunders sounded. And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down." And *the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land* raised his right hand to heaven and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there would be no more delay, but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets. Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. And he said to me, "Take and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it. *It was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter.* And I was told, "You must

again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings." (Rev 10:1–11 emphasis added)

1.

Moses crossed the Sea of Reeds on dry land; the children of Israel when following Joshua [Ἰησοῦ] cross the Jordan and into the Promised Land on dry land. But Jesus [Ἰησοῦ], Himself, walked on the water in crossing the Sea of Galilee ... Peter walked to Jesus on the sea, then when Peter saw the wind from the *quarters* (i.e. from the four corners of the earth [ἄνεμον — Strong's #G417]) Peter became afraid; he lost faith and he began to sink, and he cried out to Jesus, *Save me* (Matt 14:30). For Peter when walking on the water, what was sweet became bitter when he lost faith.

When a disciple stands on faith alone and has no foot standing on Moses (i.e., standing on dry land), the disciple will lose faith when attacked from all quarters—attacked by demonic spirit beings, the four kings of Daniel chapter seven—and doubts will cause the disciple to cry out to Jesus, to the Lord, which in this era [this context] may well result in an answered prayer. But when the Son of Man has been disrobed (Luke 17:30) and every Christian is delivered into the hand of the little horn (Dan 7:25), this little horn being the Adversary possessing the man of perdition, the prayers of the holy ones and of unbelievers won't be answered. And there will be exceeding bitterness in the belly of the Christian as he or she feels betrayed by God. Yet there will be even greater bitterness in the bellies of Observant Jews, in the bellies of devout Muslims, in the bellies of humanists who doubted the existence of God ... yes, even the hardened Marxist will call out to God to save this unbeliever when the sky seems to fall as winter figs are shaken to the ground in a gale [ἀνέμου μεγάλου]. This atheist will involuntarily cry out to God, in a manner analogous to a person involuntarily feeling fear when a lion roars nearby, or in the manner by which the prophet is compelled to deliver the words of God that the prophet has received (from Amos 3:8). The old adage that there are no atheists in a foxhole is true: there will be no atheists when the sun becomes black as sackcloth and the full moon becomes like blood and stars [stones] fall from the sky, and the great and the small of humankind hide in holes to escape from the wrath of the Lamb (see Rev 6:12–17). Calling out to God for salvation and receiving no deliverance will produce exceeding bitterness in every person's belly.

The angel that stood on the sea and on dry land did spiritually what Moses and Jesus did collectively, which gives to the little scroll qualities of walking on, standing on both sea and land, suggesting that the little scroll is a conjoined message representing Jesus and Moses ... to a sinner, grace is sweet but the law is bitter.

John's vision (i.e., the Book of Revelation) is mostly chronological, with the vision beginning with the Second Passover liberation of Israel—grace ends with the liberation of Israel through this nation being filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God [πνεῦμα Θεοῦ]. Grace ends when the Son of Man is revealed/disrobed (again, Luke 17:30).

Human persons not under the law have had their transgression of the law *covered* [not abolished] by *not being under the law*: remember, Paul's gospel holds that the sinner not under the law (i.e., the person who transgresses the law without knowledge of the law) law shall perish without the law (Rom 2:12). Thus, the person not under the law is under a form of *natural grace*; whereas, the person under the law covers

transgressions of the law by his or her obedience—by not transgressing the law. Since the person involuntarily born of spirit as a son of God [a Christian] is spiritually analogous to the human person involuntarily born as a human child to Hebrew parents, the Christian is not under the law for the equivalent to the first week of a male Hebrew infant's life; for circumcision of the Hebrew infant doesn't occur at birth but on the eighth day that the child has breathed on his or her own.

The week that a Hebrew male child lives as an uncircumcised Israelite has great significance: this week represents the period that a Christian lives under grace; under the garment of Christ Jesus' righteousness; lives without the law. This period in the Hebrew infant's life also makes the infant one with the children of Israel born in the wilderness, the generation that replaced the generation numbered in the second year virtually man for man—the children of Israel born in the wilderness were circumcised after they followed Joshua [Ἰησοῦ — *Jesus*, from Acts 7:45] across the Jordan on dry land.

To follow *Jesus* across the Jordan and into God's rest, crossing the Jordan on dry ground, is to stand on the sea [*Jesus* — Ἰησοῦ] and on the land [Moses] simultaneously:

When all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua, "Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man, and command them, saying, 'Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests' feet stood firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.'"

Then Joshua called the twelve men from the people of Israel, whom he had appointed, a man from each tribe. And Joshua said to them, "Pass on before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, *that this may be a sign among you*. When your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean to you?' then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. *So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever.*" (Josh 4:1–7 emphasis added)

A sign derives its meaning from the context in which the sign appears ... a road sign in Roadsign Forest at Watson Lake, Yukon Territory, has a different meaning than the same sign placed near the city named on the sign. The Roadsign Forest was begun by a homesick G.I. working on the Alcan Highway in 1942: the G.I. put up a sign that let all know just how far away he was from home. Since then, nearing a hundred thousand signs have been put up to *signify* that a traveler, a tourist, is far from home, with the signs denoting arrival into the Yukon, something to be celebrated, not lamented. (As an aside, my wife once bought a sack of oranges at Watson Lake because of how cheap they were: she bought them as a sign that we had finally returned to the outer reaches of civilization after spending several years in even more remote locations. Having recently come from New Zealand, the oranges were much better than any we had seen in the Aleutians.)

A sign shifts meaning as the context in which the sign appears changes—and the twelve stones, like the twelve tribes, has shifted meaning:

And the people of Israel did just as Joshua commanded and took up twelve stones out of the midst of the Jordan, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, just as the LORD told Joshua. And *they carried them over with them to the place where they lodged and laid them down there. And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant had stood; and they are there to this day.* For the priests bearing the ark stood in the midst of the Jordan until everything was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to tell the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua. (Josh 4:8–10 emphasis added)

For as long as the Jordan flows, these twelve stones were/are an invisible memorial to what the Lord did when the children of Israel crossed into the Promised Land on the 10th day of the first month—the day when the Passover lamb is chosen and penned—as the sacrificial lamb of God, a lamb of the first year and a lamb without blemish.

But the children of Israel were never without blemish. The prophet Ezekiel records,

On that day I [the Lord] swore to them [the people of Israel] 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. Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt.* So I led them out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. I gave them my statutes and made known to them my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live. Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them. But *the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness.* They did not walk in my statutes but rejected my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live; and my Sabbaths they greatly profaned. Then *I said I would pour out my wrath upon them in the wilderness, to make a full end of them. But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out.* Moreover, I swore to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them into the land that I had given them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands, because they rejected my rules and did not walk in my statutes, and profaned my Sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. Nevertheless, my eye spared them, and I did not destroy them or make a full end of them in the wilderness.

And I said to their children in the wilderness, Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor keep their rules, nor defile yourselves with their idols. I am the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and be careful to obey my

rules, and keep my Sabbaths holy that they may be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the LORD your God. But the children rebelled against me. They did not walk in my statutes and were not careful to obey my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live; they profaned my Sabbaths. Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the wilderness. But I withheld my hand and acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out. (Ezek 20:7–22 emphasis added)

Israel rebelled against the Lord when in the land of Egypt, then rebelled against the Lord a second time in the wilderness. The children of Israel rebelled against the Lord in the wilderness, then rebelled against the Lord a second time in the Promised Land ... the people of Israel that left Egypt perished in the wilderness, and the children of Israel that entered the Promised Land perished in the Promised Land. Both the people of Israel and the children of Israel perished because they refused to walk in the statutes of the Lord, obeying His rules, keeping His Sabbaths holy. Instead the people of Israel worshiped the detestable things of Egypt—they worshiped as their heathen slave masters worshiped—and the children of Israel worshiped as their parents worshiped, not as Moses commanded them.

The stones in the middle of the Jordan that marked where the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant stood are concealed by the flowing waters of the Jordan, thereby signifying that the children of Israel cannot return to Moses and the plains of Moab in the same way that they initially crossed into the Promised Land, the earthly representation of entering into God's presence. To return to Moses and the plains of Moab, they must walk on the flowing waters of the Jordan.

A Hebrew male infant, circumcised on the eighth day, is as the children of Israel were at Gilgal when “the circumcising of the whole nation was finished” (Josh 5:8) ... a Hebrew male infant, circumcised on the eighth day, is as the Christian is when filled-with and empowered by the spirit of God [πνεῦμα Θεοῦ] at the Second Passover liberation of Israel—and is as the third part of humankind (from Zech 13:9) is when the divine breath of God is poured out on all flesh. Both the Christian filled with the divine breath of God at the Second Passover, and the third part of humankind filled with the divine breath of God when the kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man—both must by faith return to Moses, and from there, cross into God's presence.

The natural children of Israel, soiled by the idolatry of their parents, never returned to Moses by faith—by walking on the flowing waters of the Jordan—thus, although the children of Israel had a law [covenant] that would have lead to righteousness if pursued by faith (Rom 9:31), these children of the nation that left Egypt sought to craft righteousness with their hands, all the while the stones commemorating the children of Israel following Joshua/Jesus/Ἰησοῦ into God's presence were concealed by the flowing waters of the Jordan.

Peter, keeping his eyes on Jesus, walked across the tumultuous water of the Sea of Galilee until he reached Jesus. Then, having arrived where he sought to go, he felt the wind coming from the quarters, lost faith, and started to sink ... the Christian, upon finding Christ, turns his or her back to Christ, feels the attack of demonic spirits, loses faith, and starts to sink. When this Christian is filled with the spirit of God so that he or she is liberated from indwelling sin and death, Jesus will not be there to lift the

Christian from the waters. And because this Christian is not grounded in Moses, the Christian has no dry land upon which he or she can walk when faith fails.

As signifiers, the twelve stones in the Jordan have been concealed from Israel for centuries, millennia. They could not be *read*. Meaning could not be assigned to them. Therefore, their *message*, written in the little scroll must be delivered to Israel [Christendom], then to the children of Israel, the third part of humankind in the Endurance. There message must be twice delivered.

2.

The narrative structure of John's vision places in sequential order the Affliction [τῆ θλίψει] and Kingdom [βασιλεία] and Endurance in Jesus [ὑπομονῆ ἐν Ἰησοῦ] (from Rev 1:9), with both the Kingdom and the Endurance sharing the definite article for the Affliction, thereby welding these three periods together into one period in which John is the brother and partner of endtime disciples. And if John is the brother and partner of endtime disciples, John bridges the gap between the 1st-century Church and the first disciples/apostles, and the 21st-Century Church that stands on the foundation Paul laid (1 Cor 3:10) and reaches upward to hold and support the endtime harvest of firstfruits.

In bridging the gap, the lacunae, separating the end of the 1st-Century CE [70 years after Calvary] from the beginning of the 21st-Century, nineteen centuries later, John recreates the textual opening in which the assumptions of the text's author, God, can be seen and *read* as previously concealed signifiers ... Paul tells disciples that they, disciples, are epistles:

You yourselves [the holy ones at Corinth] are our [Paul's] letter of recommendation, written on our [your] hearts, to be known and read by all. And you show that you are a letter [an epistle] from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. (2 Cor 3:2-3)

The Christian Church can be *read* as a text, and read as any other deconstructed text is read—the Church was deconstructed by Christ before the eyes of men and angels so that the assumptions of God cannot be mistaken or misread.

There is no need to deconstruct a text if the assumptions of the text's author don't matter. It is only when otherwise concealed assumptions do matter that a reader of texts—the auditor—makes an effort to deconstruct and show the biases of the author so that the text's author can be understood within the context of the culture that produces author and text. However, when the author deconstructs his or her own text as Herman Melville does in *Moby Dick*, the author does the work of the reader for a reason usually known only to the author, that reason might well be to show the reader that he or she isn't as smart of the person thinks he or she is. For in giving knowledge through a text, the author can also take that knowledge back in the same text, thereby casting doubts on whether anything is knowable though the simple technique of the text questioning itself.

Does Scripture question itself? What about Moses writing, "Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it" (Deut 12:32)? Add to this Jesus saying to Pharisees seeking to kill Him,

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. ... Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your

hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.
But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?
(John 5:39–40, 45–47 emphasis added)

Is Jesus, as a man, a prophet like Moses, an addition to Moses? Or is rejecting Jesus as the prophet about whom Moses wrote a taking away from Moses' words? Either way, Moses forms the basis for accepting or rejecting Jesus; for if Jesus is the prophet about whom Moses wrote—the contention here is that Jesus is—then Jesus is not an addition to Moses but comes out from Moses as a man exits his house—as the builder of the house (Heb 3:3) closes the front door of the house behind Him when He goes home for the night. And if Jesus comes out of Moses, Jesus is part of the text [the story] that is *Moses*, with *Moses* being far larger than the man Moses was. It is this enlarged *Moses* that enters into the presence of God when the firstfruits are glorified upon Christ Jesus' return, meaning that the glorified firstfruits form the text of *Moses*, a text deconstructed within itself.

Moses is the little scroll that is sweet in the mouth and bitter in the belly.
But more of this in next Sabbath's reading—

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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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