

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 *The Lord's Day*.

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

Weekly Readings

For the Sabbath of November 7, 2015

Continued from October 24 & 31, 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.

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. *Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it*, for the time is near. John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood and made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (Rev 1:1–6 emphasis added)

4.

Between the Reading for October 31st and this reading, the [Israel in Prophecy](#) series from 2005 has been updated, with eleven new segments on line and more to come.

*

In the mostly oral cultures of the Near and Middle East in the 1st-Century CE, books were “read” by the person who could read reading aloud the book to an audience of uneducated persons, the situation that John seems to reference when he declares, *Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear* (Rev 1:3), with blessed auditors for the words of the prophecy being both “the one who reads aloud” and “those who hear.”

But the words of the prophecy were not near in time, or soon to occur.

The “soon” to occur and “time is near” referents give to John’s vision urgency that has caused some scholars to argue that John’s vision was political speech for the 1st-Century; that John was warning of impending persecution of the 1st-Century Church. But any such readings will have the single kingdom of this world soon becoming the kingdom of God the Father and His Christ, with the present prince of this world being cast to earth and coming as a roaring lion to devour whomever he can ... when did or when should have Christ Jesus receive[d] dominion over the kingdom of this world? He hasn’t yet received such dominion for wars persist to this day. The world is in a state of constant warfare. And the promise of the Messiah is that He will end wars; that He will have the ability and authority to force swords to be beaten into plowshares.

The reality that faces every “Christian” is that Christ has delayed His return for so long Nietzsche observed more than a century ago, *Gott ist tot* (God is dead), with humanity having killed Him—and how are we humans to pay for such a crime other than with constant war originating in human unbelief; with drought, species extinction, and a nuclear shadow that will have its reality reduce the earth to another asteroid belt. For the murder of God amounts to suicide of the human species: the animalistic nature that is in every human person is uncoupled from fear of divine retribution for wrongdoing once God is dead. And from the perspective of the divine, all living creatures can see what is truly in the hearts of humankind when there is no fear of God or of a post-death lake of fire.

Without Jesus having delayed His return for what seems to be an unreasonably long time, no reader of this Sabbath Reading would have been conceived. Not one of us would have received the breath of life; for by the middle of the 1st-Century, God “saw” what was in the hearts of even converts to the Jesus Movement and He apparently wasn’t impressed; for with the visible physical things of this world revealing and preceding the invisible spiritual things of God, the razing of Herod’s Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE revealed and preceded the razing of the spiritual temple of God in 71 CE, forty years after Calvary, with the Body of Christ visibly dying in this world with the death of John at the end of the 1st-Century (ca 100–102 CE), seventy years after Calvary.

For God the Father to kill the spiritual Body of Christ or raze the spiritual temple, He had only to not draw any more individuals from this world and deliver them to Christ (John 6:44, 65). By the same logic, God can “resurrect” the spiritual Body of Christ by again drawing human persons from this world. Thus, as the gates of Hades could not prevail over Jesus’ earthly body, with the Father resurrecting Jesus’ earthly body from death after this body was three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, the Father can “resurrect” Jesus’ spiritual body by again drawing disciples from this world and delivering these foreknown and predestined persons to Christ Jesus to call, justify, and glorify through the indwelling of His spirit [*pneuma Christou*] in the spirit of the person [*to pneuma tou ’anthropou*].

All human persons are born with dead or lifeless inner selves, the reason why animalistic behavior is seen in humanity’s “nature” state, with human persons having less relationship fidelity than geese as well as being the most vicious of all predators, killing not to eat but for the sake of taking life, whether big game trophy hunting or establishing dominance over turf, figuratively fighting over ice, Shakespeare’s observation in *Hamlet*. So with the observation that *Gott ist tot* comes awareness that

without God, humanity is a ravenous beast that will couple with man or woman or simultaneously with both as the inclination strikes the person. There is nothing in the fleshly body of human persons that is worth saving, from the perspective of the divine. And the Adversary's argument that is suggested by human cultures having killed God is that his [the Adversary's] rebellion and that of those who believed him still makes him and his angels better candidates for redemption than any human person, born with a spiritually lifeless inner self ... from the Adversary's perspective, there is no reason for God to raise from death the inner selves of human person's. These inner selves are already dead. Leave them be. Let them continue in death. He [the Adversary] made a mistake when he told Eve that she shall not surely die if she ate forbidden fruit; for from his words, humanity has come to believe that humanly born persons have immortal souls.

From his words to Eve come Islamic fundamentalists who willingly become the delivery system for bombs intended to kill and to terrorize—to intimidate those persons who believe *Gott ist tot*; for terrorism is ineffective against the person or the nation that continues to believe God punishes evildoers. Therefore, believing Christians remain radical Islam's uncompromising enemy, even when these Christians bear no arms other than their words. For when the Christian is truly "right" with God, an unseen spiritual element comes into play.

But no Christian should expect divine protection when the Christian will not walk in this world as Christ Jesus walked, meaning that even endtime Christians are to live as Judeans, how Peter taught Gentile converts to the Jesus Movement to live and walk in Antioch (Gal 2:14).

Back to John's vision: what scholars have long missed is that the words of John's prophecy are written from within the prophecy; written from within the vision; and thus, permit angels to be "seen" via John's eyes—and not only angels, but the Lamb of God [the glorified Christ Jesus] as well as God the Father.

Then I saw in the right hand of Him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that He can open the scroll and its seven seals." And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. And He went and took the scroll from the right hand of Him who was seated on the throne. And when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every

tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." (Rev 5:1–10)

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth." (Rev 11:15–18)

If angels can be seen; if the glorified Christ can be seen in His glory (Rev 1:12–16), then seen as a slain Lamb, how He functions in the plan of God, “reading” the prophecy that the Father gave to Jesus to give “to His endtime disciples”—and yes, this is a correct reading (note the indefinite article)—is more complicated than reading a fictional Second Sophist novel based on Paul’s travels, the Book of Acts, and Acts is a classical Greek novel, with the expected motifs of a Sophist novel. But then, how many Greek novels are read by endtime, quasi-literate Christians? Any?

As far as is known, only one 2nd-Century Roman novel in Latin is known to have survived the ravages of time: *The Metamorphoses of Apuleius* (dubbed by Augustine as *The Golden Ass*) ... before the invention of the printing press, books were hand-copied, one word at a time. Thus, books were expensive, rare, and highly valued by their owners. So for a copy of *The Metamorphoses of Apuleius* to be passed from generation to generation, the novel had to be valued enough that someone either made a copy for himself from a draft of the novel, or paid a scribe to make a copy. Either way, a copy represented an expense the average person could not afford. And so it was for most books: when these books were no longer valued by society, they disappeared into the flotsam of history, with 1st and 2nd Century CE Greek novels being no exceptions. So when reading Greek novels was no longer fashionable, they disappeared from circulation. Thus, it is not surprising that few persons have, in this endtime era, read even a translation of a Second Sophist novel; therefore, there are few who would recognize a text as a Greek novel when encountering the text in a context that conceals the novel’s genre ... said bluntly, finding a Second Sophist novel in canonical Scripture will cause the reader to hesitate before properly identifying the novel [Acts] as a work of fiction.

Now, how does all of the preceding relate to Revelation? Before preceding, endtime disciples need to realize that many early 2nd-Century Christians believed John’s vision was fiction, with enough believing Revelation was fiction that the canonization of Revelation was delayed by those who wanted Second Peter instead to be canonized; for the two texts seem to have differing endtime scenarios. Eventually, a compromise was worked out that permitted both texts to be canonized, but even to this day, major denominations (Lutherans in particular) are skeptical about the validity of Revelation. So endtime disciples need to acquire sufficient literary sophistication they are able to

“hear” the two tropes John used to seal and keep secret what purports to be an unsealed prophecy, with the principle trope being that John writes from inside his vision. Disciples then read from two perspectives, each originating inside his vision.

For confirmation of John inscribing his vision from inside his vision, consider, I was in spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "*Write what you see in a book* and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea." (Rev 1:10 emphasis added)

And,

When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, 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.*" (Rev 1:17–19 emphasis added)

And again,

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."* (Rev 10:1–4 emphasis added)

To seal John's vision would be to not write what he sees and what he hears when he is inside his vision, but to wait to write as Daniel did when Daniel gives the summation of his vision (Dan 7:1).

Inside a vision, everything that happens is “soon” to happen and is “near in time.” For seeing what happens and recording what happens from inside the vision doesn't permit evaluation or interpretation of what happens, just simple description of what is seen: description without summation, without interpretation, without explanation.

John's vision is time-set in *the Lord's Day*, and location-set in *spirit*, a euphemistic expression for *<in heaven>*, not simply being filled with spirit or possessed by a spirit but actually in heaven where John was able to see the Lord in His glory.

Of necessity, *the Lord's Day*—Paul's end of the ages (1 Cor 10:11)—existed while John lived; for *the Lord's Day* has a dark or night [a turning or twisting away from God] portion as well as light or hot portion as seen in a “day” of the week ...

With God, the physical precedes and reveals the spiritual (Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 15:46), with this relationship between physical and spiritual seen in Hebraic poetry. Understanding and employing this physical/spiritual relationship is to use *the key of David* to unlock Scripture, which Paul does through his use of dual referents as the word *<day>* refers to both *<night>* and *<the daylight portion>* of one “day,” these two portions of one day being analogous to the physical [darkness] preceding the spiritual

[light], with Christ Jesus being the light of this world (John 1:4). Thus, a spiritual day consists of a period when there is no light in this world—when the Creator of all that has been made isn't inside His creation—and of a period when there is *light* in this world, a period analogous to Jesus' earthly ministry, with this being the logic for Paul writing,

Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. (2 Cor 4:3–7)

John said, again from inside his vision, that he was *in spirit on the Lord's Day*, with him initially being in spirit on the dark portion of the Lord's Day, the night portion that represents a turning or twisting away from God (the story of greater Christendom since mid 1st-Century CE) ... to understand John traversing from the dark portion to the light portion of the Lord's Day, the description of the glorified Christ Jesus must be compared between chapter one and chapter five:

I was in spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea." Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around His chest. The hairs of His head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, His feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and His voice was like the roar of many waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, from His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and His face was like the sun shining in full strength. (Rev 1:10–16)

And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals." And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. (Rev 5:5–6)

When John looked and saw "a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.' At once I was in spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne" (Rev 4:1–2), John was already in spirit, but a change had occurred: in *coming up here*, John left the night or dark portion of the Lord's Day and entered into the transitional period [dawn] to the day portion of the Lord's Day. So there is continuity between what John writes when he states that he is

the brother and partner of disciples in the Affliction and Kingdom [no definite article] and Endurance in Jesus [again, no definite article] (Rev 1:9).

The dark portion of the Lord's Day began at Calvary; the light or day portion will begin when the single kingdom of this world is given to the Son of Man halfway through seven endtime years of tribulation. The dark portion ends when the Creator of all things physical, having the glory He had before the creation returned to Him, fights here on earth on a (indefinite article) day of battle (Zech 14:3), while Michael and his angels fight the old serpent Satan the devil in heaven:

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!" (Rev 12:7–12)

The light portion of the Lord's Day begins with the Son of Man's receipt of dominion over the single kingdom of this world on the doubled day 1260, halfway through the seven endtime years of tribulation, and extends forward through the coming of the new heavens and new earth (Rev 21:1–2). There is no end to the light portion of the Lord's Day.

The writer of Revelation, John, displays greater contextual sophistication than sophistication of syntax; for the grammar of the transcribed prophecy suggests that the writer was still mentally translating Aramaic words into the Greek text he wrote ...

If the Second Sophist author of Acts, a writer of polished Greek, didn't know to give every speaker his or her own "voice" but produced speech and speeches that sound alike for every character (a common failing of beginning 21st-Century writers), then it isn't likely that an exiled John on Patmos had, of himself, the literary sophistication needed to consciously use the trope of writing from inside the vision to time-seal his prophecy ... yes, there were early 2nd-Century writers who wrote from inside their alleged visions, but their texts were simplistic in comparison to Revelation, in which a second trope is employed to prevent the unsealing of John's vision until Daniel's visions were unsealed in the generic *time of the end*, this second trope being that from chapter four on, how things/beings appear are how these things function in the prophecy. Appearance equals function. Thus, Christ Jesus' appearance in chapter five as a slain Lamb is how Jesus functions in the plan of God. What appears as seven horns on the Head of the slain Lamb are seen in chapter one as seven candlesticks, about which the glorified Jesus tells John, "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 1:20 emphasis added).

Without the prophecy identifying the seven eyes (from Rev 5:6) as seven spirits of God send out into all the earth, identification of these seven spirits as the angels of the seven churches—thereby displacing these churches from specific geographical locations to worldwide locations—would be less certain. But because a hard-link is established between the slain Lamb and Christ Jesus, the slain Lamb of God, the trope of appearance equals function is disclosed, and endtime disciples can quit looking for secular referents for spiritual entities and events.

John’s isolation as an exile on the Isle of Patmos caused him to be physically separated from the seven named churches on the Roman mail route to which he was suppose to send letters ... delivery of these letters would have been difficult and would have been delayed until Rome forgot about him. So even with late 1st-Century CE delivery of these messages to the seven churches, these words of knowledge would have been ignored.

The series [Israel in Prophecy](#) better explicates what this Sabbath Reading begins.

* * *

"Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved."