

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 logia of Jesus.

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

Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of November 8, 2014*

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 beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight,'" John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when He came up out of the water, immediately He saw the heavens being torn open and the spirit descending [*eis* – into] Him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my [Son, the Beloved]; with you I am well pleased." The spirit immediately drove Him out into the wilderness. And He was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And He was with the wild animals, and the angels were ministering to Him. Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:1–15)

1.

The physical reveals and precedes the spiritual (*cf.* Rom 1:20; 1 Cor 15:46). John the Baptist was a physical man with a physical message, *Repent, make straight paths to the Lord who will baptize [submerge] you in life.* As baptism in water is unto death ("Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into

His death?” — Rom 6:3), baptism in spirit is unto life. And as the spirit “drove” Jesus into the wilderness (caused Jesus to go into the wilderness) representing where the Azazel was to be taken by the hand of a fit man and released year by year on *Yom Kipporim*—the fit man serving as a representation of the spirit, an analogy that when examined closely breaks down for the fit man only imparts life to the Azazel by not killing it but by releasing the goat that bears the sins of Israel, with the wilderness being analogous to heaven—the Adversary came to Jesus to tempt Him who was without sin ... with what could the Adversary tempt Jesus? In Matthew’s Gospel; in Luke’s Gospel, Jesus fasted during the forty days He was in the wilderness and was hungry afterward.

Matthew’s Gospel has the Adversary coming to Jesus to tempt Him after the forty days of fasting:

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, He was hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." (Matt 4:1–3)

Luke’s Gospel, however, would seem to have the tempter plaguing Jesus throughout the forty days of fasting:

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, He was hungry. The devil said to Him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” (Luke 4:1–3)

John’s Gospel neglects any temptation account ... certainly, none of the disciples were witnesses to the temptation of Christ Jesus—and how much would Jesus have said to His disciples about the Adversary tempting Him immediately after He was baptized? More than what John Mark records in his account of what Peter taught about Christ Jesus’ life and ministry? Not likely, considering that there was much that Jesus didn’t share with His disciples.

Concerning the origins of Mark’s Gospel, the only seemingly reliable information that comes to endtime disciples is from Eusebius, who quotes verbatim an excerpt from Bishop Papias of Hierapolis’ five volume work, *Exposition of the Sayings of the Lord* (ca 100 CE), the work now lost. Apparently, Papias inscribed the 1st-Century Christian oral tradition and what this tradition said about the origins of the Gospels, but because Papias’ work was lost before the modern era began, all Christians have today is what Eusebius cites in his third book. Eusebius doesn’t mention Papias in his fourth book, suggesting that Papias was no longer around by 109 CE.

Papias knew John the Elder, and cites John concerning Mark: *In his capacity as Peter’s interpreter, Mark accurately wrote down as many things as he recalled from memory, though not in an ordered form; for he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied Him. He wrote down later Peter’s teachings which Peter gave in the form of chreiai but without intention of providing an ordered arrangement of the logia of the Lord. Consequently, Mark did nothing wrong when he wrote down some individual items just as he related them from memory. For he made it his one concern not to omit anything he had heard or to falsify anything.*

Chreia represents a *useful* teaching in the form of an anecdote relating a saying and/or action, with these anecdotes forming collections such as the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas.

Peter apparently taught converts through some form of, *And Jesus said ...*

Because Peter didn't use a structured, chronological narrative in his teachings about Christ Jesus, no structured narrative exists apart from what John Mark constructs for his Gospel, and what is presented in John's Gospel; for both Matthew's complex Gospel and Luke's redacted Gospel rely upon Mark's Gospel for their event chronology. This is true, regardless of what the Christian disciple was taught about the Bible being the infallible Word of God in the disciple's youth.

Endtime Christians tend to ignore Mark's Gospel, which conveys a sense of haste [the many times *immediately* is used], a sense of wonder, almost that of a wide eyed child awed by a circus performance. But perhaps the greatest sense of wonder is imbedded in the ending of Mark's Gospel as existed prior to the addition of verses in the 4th-Century; for the Gospel rightly ends with Mark 16:8,

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint Him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that He is going before you to Galilee. There you will see Him, just as He told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. (Mark 16:1–8)

If the women said nothing, how did the disciples learn that Jesus rose from the dead?

The end of Mark's Gospel was troubling to early Greek philosophers who had become Christian converts. This ending had to be "repaired," that is made to agree with, particularly, the ending of Luke's Gospel; hence the long form of Mark's ending came into existence in the 4th-Century and was "found" and attached to the end of the Gospel, thereby eliminating at least one theological problem but laying the basis for snake-handling Christians.

Peter preached *Christ* without having any of the Gospels, but preached Christ from being a witness to those things that Jesus did. He preached Christ for at least a quarter of a century using *chreiai*: *And Jesus said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in this good news"* (Mark 1:15). And Peter would then go on to explicate the good news of the kingdom, this good news being that men would be healed from death through believing that Jesus was Lord of heaven and of earth, with their belief that Jesus was Lord causing all to live as Judeans without transgression of the Commandments. Outward circumcision of adult males meant nothing: Gentile converts need not be physically circumcised (see Gal 2:14 in Greek). What mattered was the disciple having the faith of Abraham, believing the words of Christ Jesus—and the words of Christ Jesus came to the convert in the form of, *And He said ...*

How is Christ Jesus preached to the world today? Does not a pastor or a priest take from Scripture a snippet and say, *My text for today is ...* then go on to relate anecdotal

matter or pop psychology or some shallow reading of other snippets of Scripture, all in a pleasant voice, all intended not to offend and not to impart the criticism, the knowledge of Scripture they learned in the university. These pastors and priests put happy faces on Jesus saying,

Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in Him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees Him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has Himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me. (John 12:44–50)

The *logia* of the Lord is the judge of every person, but how do endtime disciples know what Jesus said or didn't say when Scripture seems to contradict itself ... how many women went to the Garden Tomb on the day after the Sabbath, one, two, three, or many? And what did the resurrected Jesus say to these women, if anything? Did the resurrected Jesus appear to two believers, one named Cleopas, before He appeared to the Eleven? Did the resurrected Jesus meet with the Eleven in Galilee, or did only seven go fishing, meeting with the Lord on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, not on a mountain?

What did Peter teach about what happened after the Resurrection? We don't know; for according to Papias, citing John the Elder, Peter taught using *chreiai* that John Mark faithfully recorded, adding nothing to what Peter taught and leaving out nothing. And Mark's Gospel ends with the two women saying nothing out of fear.

The author of Luke's Gospel, relying upon oral traditions as well as upon what others had written, adds much to what Peter taught as recorded by John Mark, then this author crafts a Second Sophist quasi-historical novel from Paul's epistles, has the end torn off his novel but the novel otherwise retained as the infallible history of the early Christian Church, with Paul's teachings forming the core of the *Jesus message*. The only problem is, the author of Luke's Gospel doesn't well understand Judaism, creates problems for himself with Mary's relationship to Elizabeth, and more serious problems with how his *Paul* expressed Jesus' relationship with God the Father in Acts chapter 17.

In the Garden Temptation account of Adam and Eve, Adam creates problems for himself by adding to what God told him about eating the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil ... God said nothing to Adam about not touching this tree. But God left Eve's instruction to Adam, and Adam apparently added not *touching* to eating so that when the serpent stood before Eve and asked, "Did God actually say, "You shall not eat of any tree in the garden"?" (Gen 3:1), Eve was quick to justify the ways to God to the serpent:

And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Gen 3:2–5)

By making that seemingly innocent addition to the words of God (*not touching the tree*), Adam set Eve and himself up to fail. For Adam's obedience—Adam being the head

of Eve, her husband—covered Eve as Christ Jesus' obedience covers disciples: Eve could eat and not die. Eve could touch the tree and not die. Adam could not eat of the tree, however; for Adam to eat would have been disobedience, unbelief of God.

Elevation of Mary, mother of Jesus, to the theological height the Roman Church has elevated her comes from the author of Luke's Gospel adding to the word of God ...

What need was there for the author of Luke's Gospel to add to the *logia* of the Lord; for what has Mary to do with the word [*logos*] of Jesus that Jesus left with His disciples as their judge? And it will be the *logia* of the Lord that judges unbelieving disciples. Believing disciples will have their belief [faith — *pisteos*] of God counted to them as righteousness, thereby causing them to pass from death to life without coming under judgment (John 5:24).

Peter taught using *chreia* because it is those things that Jesus said that is the judge of believing and unbelieving disciples, with believing disciples not coming under judgment because they believe the words of Jesus and of the one who sent Him into this world. Unbelieving disciples do not; hence, they will be judged by what they heard but didn't believe. Christianity is just this simple. For the person who walks in this world as Jesus walked also believes the writings of Moses (John 5:45–47).

No Christian can ignore the Sabbath and claim to believe the words of Jesus ... oh, some will say that Jesus as the Lord of the Sabbath—the Sabbath representing both the Promised Land and heaven—had the power to change the Sabbath, but He didn't change the Sabbath. Why would He change His Millennial rule, also represented by the Sabbath, moving the Thousand Years to a later day, or eliminating it all together? Why would Jesus send His disciples somewhere other than New Jerusalem when they are glorified? Arguments for Jesus having changed the Sabbath are all made from ignorance by agents of the Adversary.

It is, today, having the bruised words of Jesus as our only words from Him, easy to trap ourselves in the physicality of Judaism, or in the Mary cult or in some other cult, grown large because of the easy grace preached by the cult, but *Philadelphia* is willing to believe the words of Jesus that we have, live by them, and do the best we can to grow in grace and knowledge. Amen.

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